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A

VOYAGE

ROUND

THE COASTS OF SCOTLAND

AND THE ISLES.

86126

BY

JAMES WILSON, F.R.S.E., M.W.S., &c.

VOL. I.

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TO

SIR THOMAS DICK LAUDER, BARONET,

OF FOUNTAINHALL,

THIS RECORD OF

A VOYAGE,

UNDERTAKEN AT HIS SUGGESTION,

AND WITH THE ADVANTAGE OF HIS COMPANIONSHIP,

IS INSCRIBED BY

HIS SINCERE AND FAITHFUL FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFATORY NOTE.

HAVING been requested by the HONOURABLE the COMMISSIONERS of the BOARD of FISHERIES to accompany their SECRETARY throughout the course of his voyage of inspection in the summer of 1841, for the purpose of making certain investigations into the natural history of the herring, I have been since induced, not so much by the "solicitation of friends" as the more weighty arguments of my respected Publishers, to endeavour to impart to others a portion of the interest which that voyage excited in my own mind. The object of the Secre-

tary on this occasion was to acquire a general knowledge of the whole coasts of Scotland, especially of the districts near which fisheries had been or might with advantage be established, and to make himself acquainted with the character and position of the various harbours erected by the Board. We had therefore occasion to visit many localities not within the range of the ordinary tourist, as well as to explore those numerous isles and picturesque inlets for which our western shores especially are so remarkable,—and if there is either truth or intelligence in the following Journal of Observations, it may possibly tend both to instruct those who have not yet examined the coast scenery of their native country, and to recall agreeable remembrances to such as have enjoyed that pleasure.

I have endeavoured to dwell chiefly on whatever matters may be regarded as of general interest,—the special objects of our more professional enquiries being discussed

in separate reports, which Sir Thomas Dick Lauder and myself have already had the satisfaction to lay before the Honourable Commissioners.

My best thanks are due to the gentleman just named not only for the use of his Sketch-Books, from which the illustrations of the present volumes have been mostly drawn, but also for access to his Journal. By consulting the latter my own impressions have been strengthened and refreshed, and my chief regret now is that one so much more able than myself to do justice to the subject, both with pen and pencil, should have been prevented by other and more important avocations from undertaking the task. I have also to express my obligations to the Artists who have lent their labour to the work, more especially Mr. Charles H. Wilson, who not only prepared the more finished drawings, but executed the numerous etchings on *steel*,—a material with which he had not been

previously conversant, and the harder surface of which, compared with that of copper, renders the process of etching more difficult and laborious.

Other occupations on my own part, and a prolonged residence in the lake country of the north of England, have postponed the publication of the present volumes to a later time than was intended.

J. W.

WOODVILLE, EDINBURGH.
November, 1842.

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COASTING VOYAGE

ROUND

SCOTLAND.

CHAPTER I.

REMINISCENCE OF FORMER TIMES—THE RIVER CLYDE—EMBARKATION AT GREENOCK—THE FIRTH OF CLYDE—BUTE—ARRAN—CAMPBELTOWN—THE AYRSHIRE COAST—DUNURE CASTLE—LOCH RYAN—CULHORN—CASTLE KENNEDY—DUNSKEY—BALLANTRAE.

It occurred to me in early life to visit the sandy and scarcely perceptible shores of Holland, where the sole sights which meet the eye of the approaching mariner are the outstretched arms of windmills, and the heavenward-pointing spires of churches. I had also seen the Nase of Norway looming through the Scandinavian mists; and entering the Cattegat, and passing through the Sound, I visited the green shores of Zealand, and

the adjacent Danish isles. I had skirted the coasts of Scania, the most southern of the Swedish provinces, and explored the Holstein shores—both those which open towards the Great Belt, and such as are river-bounded by the flowing Elbe. At an after period I had crossed the Bay of Biscay, and trending southwards from Gallicia to the Algarves, experienced the refreshing influence of the landward breezes, when tempered and pervaded by the almost aromatic odour of the pine forests of Portugal. I had witnessed the glories of sunrise off the memorable Cape St. Vincent, had passed over the now stainless waters of Trafalgar, and after entering the Straits, beheld the great luminary sinking behind the embattled heights of Gibraltar—that vast rock which, alas! still casts its far morning shadows over a blood-stained land. I had gazed with wonder on the cloud-surmounting summits of the Sierra Nevada, those

"Earthquake-rifted mountains of bright snow,"

which in summer refresh the sultry plains of Granada by the partial melting of their spotless mantle. I had passed the Balearic Isles, and along the eastern coasts of Spain, from Cape de

Gaeta to the Bay of Rosas, and crossing the Gulf of Lyons, entered the harbour of Genoa, and then coursed along the Tuscan and other shores of the "Saturnia Tellus."

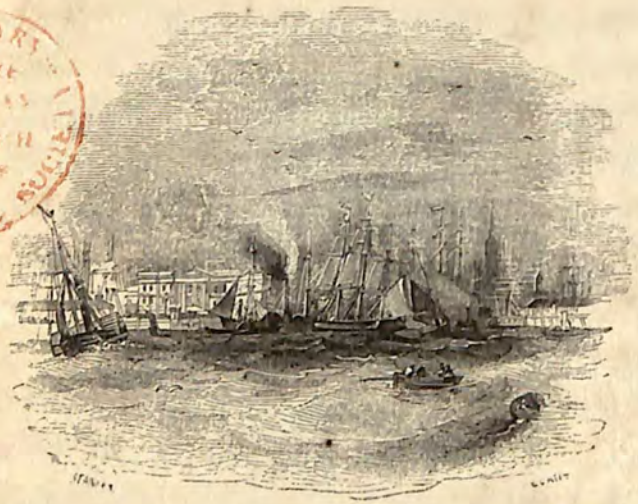
But in these and other wanderings, both by sea and land, I had in a great measure, as many more have done, neglected what was nearer home—the coasts of Scotland and her almost countless isles, from the "Greater and Lesser Cumbrays" to the far Unst, the most northern portion of the British kingdom. Particular points of these I had indeed visited at intervals in the course of my angling, or other peregrinations; but I had never gazed on them with that insatiate eye which is so often cast on foreign lands, nor even more deliberately viewed them as objects of any special interest. A recent long-continued voyage in the Princess Royal fishery-cutter, during which I enjoyed peculiar advantages for the observation of a great portion of the Scottish coasts, enabled me to see the subject in another light, and my wonder grew from day to day that I had journeyed in my youth to foreign lands in search of the magnificent and picturesque, while such a boundless variety of almost unexampled beauty lay so close at hand. To give a slight

account of this voyage is the object of the present work.

Nothing need here be said of a pleasant party who left the Modern Athens for Glasgow (on the 16th of June), although the day has almost come when a leisurely trip, with time to look about one, and take cognisance of hedge-rows and hay-stacks, will never more be known between the shores of Forth and Clyde,—but railway trains will start like Congreve rockets, and whiz the unsuspecting passengers to what is encouragingly called a *terminus*, with little intermediate knowledge of those great abstractions—time and space. The day was remarkable for this, among other things, that rain began to fall in and around Edinburgh, after a six weeks continuance of perfectly dry and dropless weather. Although, for ourselves, we feared the subsequent prevalence of too much moisture, we yet rejoiced with the rejoicing farmer, and enjoyed the freshened green of the reviving meadows, and the rapid darkening of the sun-burned soil.

Regarding the great Capital of the West of Scotland, we shall merely repeat the words of her own civic motto—"Let Glasgow flourish." We were casually informed that a great revolution has

taken place of late years in the "drinking usages" of that vast emporium—*punch* being an article now almost unknown. There is nothing permanent on earth. Neither need any thing be said of the merely river portion of the Clyde,—of its muddy waters, pent within stone-built banks or slushy margins, and beat unceasingly by paddle-turning steamers of every form and size, from the low penurious-looking dingy *tugs*, to those monarchs of the main, which containing the strength of 500 horses within their fiery lungs, thunder along the foaming surface of the briny deep, like huge leviathians unto "the manner born." As anglers, however, we could not help feeling and lamenting how the sensations of a new-run salmon "all scaled silver bright," and fresh from the sparkling and pellucid sea, must be offended while it passes through such an unhappy medium as presents itself between Dumbarton and the Broomielaw, and onwards still through yet more turbid courses, before it gains the upland waters of the sylvan Clyde. How rejoicingly will it then plunge and spring among those surging pools which stream for ever with the downward flow of mighty falls, cleaving "the wave-worn precipice."



GREENOCK.

On the afternoon of the 17th of June we embarked from Greenock on board the Princess Royal (Captain Stewart), a beautiful new cutter of 103 tons, built by Government (and Mr. Steele) for the fishery service.* Though anchored at some

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* To Captain Stewart, of the Princess Royal, our grateful thanks are due for his obliging disposition, and unfailing attention to our personal comforts. His high character in matters relating to his own calling would gain no support from our unprofessional testimony, but we are desirous to record that during a voyage of nearly three months continuance, and performed under a great variety of external circumstances, the internal arrangements of the cutter were constantly conducted in the

distance off the shore, we had descried her from afar by her long streaming pennon, by which, as a Queen's cutter, she was distinguished from those of meaner birth. We were, indeed, well pleased to exchange the noise and tumult of a Glasgow steamer, with its perpetual throbbing pulse and frequent boisterous breathing, for the tranquil order, comparatively roomy space, and cleanly keeping of the Princess Royal. This projected voyage was her first, and we could not help admiring (a novel sight, of course, to landsmen,) how completely all things had been thought of and provided for; and how, when for the first time her anchor was upheaved, her sails set, her sheets belayed, and all her bravery on—"She walked the waters like a thing of life." Although she seemed to answer her helm beautifully, the slight airs

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most satisfactory and accommodating manner. Much of what may be called the domestic pleasure and convenience of such a voyage necessarily depends upon the Captain, and in these respects none could be more fortunate than we. Our best acknowledgments are also due to Mr. M'Alister, the mate, and indeed to the entire crew, for their uniform good conduct and activity, in relation to their own duties, and their civility and attention to ourselves.

with which we were at first favoured speedily died away, till the sea assumed an almost glassy calmness; and, although we overtook numerous vessels, and indeed beat every moving thing (except the sea-fowl) which we had had within our range of sight at starting, no proper opportunity occurred of ascertaining by comparison her rate of sailing. Mr. Kerr's beautiful little yacht, the Falcon, was lying alongside when we weighed anchor. She is said to fly almost like the bird whose name she bears; but, even had it suited her owner to accompany us upon a trial cruise, her great disparity of size (27 ton) would have prevented our drawing any fair or positive conclusion.

Slipping slowly downwards in the evening twilight, we rather felt than saw the solemn beauty of the scene around us. But although minuter features were obscured or hidden, we could still discern in the distance the vast amphitheatre of the Argyllshire and other mountains, and the various majestic gorges which, opening upwards, admit the "great sea-waters" to wind their way into many a far solitude among those Highland vales. The beautiful Gair-Loch, with its ducal palace embowered amid ancestral trees,—Loch

Long, the deep-indented, darkening as it ascends beneath the frowning shadows of the eternal hills, and at length almost mingling its briny flood with the sweet waters of Loch Lomond,—the Holy Loch, a solemn place, alike by name and nature, where noble dust lies now unconscious of meaner clay,—these magnificent scenes which we had so often before gazed on amid the splendour of many a cloudless noon, we now beheld in sombre majesty, by "dim suffusion veiled."

Our intention being to anchor for the night in Rothesay Bay, we took the usual course southwards. Dunoon, itself a long extended and still extending village, and the fair white walls of those numerous summer dwellings which stretch along the Cowal shore, were visible in spite of the increasing darkness, while, on the opposite side, a long columnar line of sparkling light was thrown upon the surface of the quiet waters. Some one deemed that this effect was one of moonlight, but it was afterwards ascertained to proceed from a light-house, for two reasons: 1st, there was no moon (and this might suffice); 2dly, we were opposite the *Cloch*. But the mistake put us on our guard respecting any corresponding hallucination

on the part of Toward Point, where there is also a light, but one which, revolving much more rapidly than the moon, is easily distinguished from that luminary. We were at this time quite becalmed, and retiring ere long to our respective places of repose, became soon unconscious of the external world, till we heard the harsh rattling of the chain cable as the anchor was dropt in Rothesay Bay, in Bute, between three and four in the morning.*

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* The term Bute is said to be derived from *Ebudæ*, the name by which our western isles in general were formerly denominated,—the more usual appellation of *Hebrides* being said to have taken its rise in a misprint for *Hibudes*, in an edition of Bede, published in Paris. The name of Rothesay is derived from the Gaelic *Roth-suidhe*—circular seat, or place where courts were held—these being usually assembled in ancient times on rounded artificial mounds, called *Laws*, or motes. The island consists of two parishes,—Rothesay the northern,—Kingarth (*Ceann Garbh*, or stormy head,) the southern. A line drawn from the river mouth of Loch Quien to that of Loch Ascog, gives the divisional boundary. The population of the county of Bute (which includes Arran and other islands), according to the last census (1841), was 15,695. Though Bute itself was originally a Highland district, the Gaelic tongue is going rapidly into disuse, being scarcely understood at all by any of the younger people.

On going on deck at an early hour on the 18th, we looked around with pleasure on the old familiar face of things. The day, however, was dull and *gloggy*, with that warm, soft, dampish feeling, so frequent in Rothesay, and which differs as much from the livelier heat of direct sunshine as bouilli does from roast. The aspect of the weather promised rain, and faithfully performed it, for we had much sooner the beginning than the end of a lashing and continuous shower. This is a pleasant looking place, with a now widely extended semicircular range of houses stretching along almost the very margin of the shore, with, in the older portion of the town, some parallel streets higher up, and shorter ones intersecting and connecting these together,

"By distance made more *sweet*."

There are also various separate villas at intervals along the eastern shore, and stretching southwards opposite the Ayrshire coast, but these latter, as well as the more northern village of Port Bannatyne, are invisible from vessels anchored in the quiet bay. Rothesay has been much frequented for many seasons, both by invalids for the sake of

the general mildness of its climate, and by summer idlers, on account of its amenity of situation. It is also very centrally placed in relation to steamboat facilities, presenting almost hourly opportunities to the lounger, of being borne away to one or other of the nearer or more distant Highland lochs,—either upward towards the Dumbarton portion of the Firth of Clyde, or westward by the Kyles of Bute, a narrow-winding sea-way, which exhibiting in itself some of the most peculiar and picturesque scenes in Scotland, leads in the direction of the sublimer shores of Arran, or those more varied sylvan slopes which enclose and beautify the deep Loch Fine. It may be predicted, that as our modern Athenians hope through the iron medium of the railway to draw towards their learned legal city some extraneous and commercial wealth, so will that same expeditious mode of travel induce our eastern people to perform their summer migrations westwards, to enjoy the balmy freshness of these sea-girt isles.

Having transacted our fishery, and other business on shore, we would have weighed anchor for Campbeltown without delay, but there was scarcely a breath of air to fill the tiniest sail, and we were

unable to leave the bay. We learned that no fishing of any consequence had as yet been carried on hereabouts this season, and we ourselves ate to breakfast all the herrings (not quite a dozen) which appeared in the market in the morning. There were several vessels in the harbour laden with salt, and above 300 barrels of that essential article were lying ready for shipment on the quays. We had an opportunity of seeing Morton's patent slip in operation, and it seemed to work admirably.

The fisheries, especially of the southern parts of Bute, are chiefly those of whiting, haddock, and cod; and of recent years a salmon fishing has been established around the general shores, which gives promise of advantage. Soles are not unfrequent, and sethe are abundant. The herring fishery is carried on chiefly in the *Kyles*, and the adjacent Argyllshire lochs (Striven and Ridon) which debouche from the northwards. The cooperages of Rothesay turn out about 15,000 herring barrels yearly, which are valued at £3000. Cockles are abundant in St. Ninian's Bay. It is the opinion of the clergyman (Rev. Robert Craig,) that if the fishermen of Bute were a little more active and enterprising, these island shores might in many

respects be rendered more productive. In regard to fresh water fishes, there are plenty of pike and perch in Lochs Fad and Ascog, and good trout may be caught in Loch Greenan.

On the antiquities of Bute we cannot here dilate. We had almost said they were well known, but we qualify the expression when we perceive that a well instructed antiquary, in describing Rothesay Castle, says, "it is supposed to have been first built about the year 1100, as a frontier fortress *against the Norwegian power* in the western islands;"* while the minister of the parish tells us that it "was probably one of those erected by Magnus Barefoot, king of Norway, in 1098, *to secure his conquest* of the western islands of Scotland."† Certain it is, however, that the said royal Castle is still a noble and imposing pile, "majestic though in ruins," consisting of a huge circular wall, surrounding an open court of nearly 140 feet in diameter, and containing within it four round towers, between two of which exteriorly and on the north-east side, there is a square build-

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* *Picture of Scotland*, (p. 483) by Robert Chambers.

† *New Statistical Account of Scotland*, No. xxvii., p. 101.

ing, 72 feet in length by 33 in breadth, with a height of three stories, and a range of subterranean vaults beneath. We regretted to find that the magnificent thorn tree, which (in the long absence of kings and barons) had for unknown years adorned the interior court, had fallen to the ground, and was rearing one half of its old fantastic roots on high. However the other half seemed to answer the purposes of vegetation well enough, for the tree was in full leaf. Parts of the outer walls and buildings are covered by luxuriant ivy, and so on both sides "ruin greenly dwells." These old castles, with their leafy screens and sombre shadows, are certainly pleasant places of repose during the dry and burning dog-days (when such occur), and one may then revert to scenes of joy and revelry enacted in them in the olden time; but in dark and dripping weather,—with the stones beneath our feet so black and slimy, the grass so long and rank, the surrounding walls so redolent of an almost church-yard odour,—our associations undergo a corresponding change. When we formerly visited these ruins, the sun was bright in heaven, and the sweet voices of glad children sounded in our ears more cheerily than the sky-

lark's song; but now the same scene wore an air of melancholy desolation—

"And fears and fancies thick upon us came,
Dim sadness, and blind thoughts, we knew not, nor could name."

Even our historical recollections led us to think not of tournaying knights, and the proud emblazonry of ancient chivalry, but only of one hoary-headed monarch, broken down by grief and age. In this Castle Robert III. secluded himself to mourn over the cruel murder of his eldest son, the Duke of Rothesay, and the detention in England of the younger; and here, in a small and narrow chamber, he expired.*

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* The creations of the Dukedoms of Rothesay and Albany, in favour of the son and brother of King Robert III., were the earliest examples of the ducal rank in Scotland. The innovation continued to be viewed with distrust in our ancient kingdom even down to a comparatively late period. The title had indeed, as Sir Walter Scott observes, been "in almost every case united with heavy misfortunes—not rarely with tragic crimes." The national hopes are now high regarding our present "Duke of Rothesay," for that is a title still borne by every male heir-apparent of the British throne. May he be preserved to lead a long and happy life of honour and virtue. The following was the fate of the first Duke of Rothesay:—"The Duk of Albany," (a

Again the grating of the cable was heard, as our anchor was upheaved soon after two in the morning of the 19th. We were not so restless as to look much about us at this early hour, for sleep,

"It is a gentle thing, beloved from pole to pole;"

so we passed southwards between the Kingarth division of Bute and the Cumbrays, without any very precise inspection of either coast. We know, however, that inwards from Kilchattan Bay, and towards the centre of the narrower portion of the parish, stand the interesting ruins of the Chapel of St. Blane, said to have been founded near the

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considerate uncle) "tuk the Duk of Rothesay betwix Dunde and Sanct Androis, and brocht him to Falkland, and inclusit him in the tour thairof, but ony meit or drink. It is said ane woman, havand commiseratioun on this Duk, leit meill fall doun throw the loftis of the toure: bequhilkis his life wes certane dayis savit. This woman, fra it wes knawin, wes put to deith. On the same maner, ane other woman gaif him milk of her paup, throw ane lang reid; and wes slane with gret cruelte, fra it wes knawin. Than wes the Duk destitute of all mortall supplie; and brocht finalie to sa miserable and hungry appetite, that he eit nocht allenarlie the filth of the toure quhare he wes, bot his awin fingaris: to his gret marterdome."—BOECE'S CRONIKLIS.

close of the tenth century. They certainly exhibit an aspect of great antiquity, and the level space on which they stand is itself artificially raised above the surrounding ground, and enclosed by a rude but massy wall 500 feet in circumference. There is mason work beneath all this area at a depth of about two feet below ground, and in an adjoining grove there is a remarkable building, of unknown usage, consisting of a circular wall 9 feet thick, 10 feet high, and 30 feet in diameter, the interior filled up with rubbish. The masonry is rude, many of the individual stones are of immense size, and the general style of workmanship indicates even a more ancient origin than that of the adjoining buildings. "The scene around," Mr. Buchanan has well observed, "is one of uncommon beauty. Towards the north an amphitheatre of lofty grey rocks secures the seclusion of a spot with whose time-worn relics it so well harmonizes. On the right, the grove with its deep shade forms a grateful object for the eye to repose upon, while its mysterious associations carry the mind back to events and ages long past. Before us lifts up its dim form, all that remains of a pile, around which is gathered the depth of

interest which its sacred use, its great antiquity, and its gracefulness, even in decay, are so well calculated to create;"* while to the south the heaving ocean and the distant shores recede in softened beauty.

Although the sea around the Cumbrays yields a plentiful supply of fish of the ordinary market kind, the *take* of herrings has so much diminished there of late years, that that fishery has been almost entirely abandoned. Leaving these Islands, and the southern point of Bute behind us, we took our course towards Arran, and had a good run, with a light wind, in the direction of Brodick Bay. But, alas! for the far-famed majesty of that sublime retreat—the sea and sky, the rocky shores, the woods, the lofty mountains, were all alike concealed from mortal view. We soon after passed through Lamlash Bay, breakfasting there under the lee of Holy Island, a large mountain mass of an Arthur Seat like form. This "sacred isle" was inhabited in ancient days by a certain St. Molios, a disciple of St. Columba, who, deeming the discipline of Iona too lax and indulgent, re-

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xxvii., p. 88.

tired hither for still greater seclusion, and was eventually the means of spreading the blessed influence of Christianity among the, till then, pagan inhabitants of Arran. A cave or excavation in the red sandstone is still pointed out as his ascetic abode. A monastery, mentioned by Dean Munro, stood about a mile northwards, and the consecrated ground around it was used as a place of sepulture for some hundred years after the building was itself in ruins. It was, however, abandoned in consequence of the loss of a large funeral party from Arran, who were drowned by the upsetting of a boat during a violent squall.

It took us a long time with so light a wind to make much way along these eastern and southern shores of Arran. We had not previously formed any accurate notion of their great extent, and occasional fertility, and we greatly regretted the foggy condition of the atmosphere. From former experience we knew that had the sky been clear, we would have enjoyed some magnificent views,—that from the great height of the Alpine mountains, they would have continued to fill our wondering gaze throughout the live-long day; and that the sight of the rocky peaks of the far Goat-

Fell, when illumined by the glorifying influence of the evening sun, would have rejoiced our hearts. But as it was, these "everlasting hills" remained almost unseen by us, although at different periods throughout the day the nearer beach became distinct enough, and we had many sweet consolatory views of shepherds' huts perched upon rocky ranges, and the fishers' lowlier homes—

> "And saw the children sport upon the shore,
> And heard the mighty waters rolling evermore."

The island of Arran, like that of Bute, consists ecclesiastically of two parishes, which stretch north and south:—Kilbride, containing the eastern division,—Kilmorie, the southern extremity, and all the western side. Its scenery in many parts is almost as much noted for magnificence as that of any district in the British dominions. The actual height of Goat-Fell, the most elevated of the range, is under 3000 feet, but its nearness to the sea, its truly Alpine character, the deep and solemn vales which it overshadows, and the general grouping of the adjoining mountains, present a rocky strength and grandeur of effect elsewhere rarely equalled. Its geology has proved a fruitful

field to the Hammermen of all countries, and many rare plants, and several uncommon insects occur upon its varied surface.* In regard to quadrupeds, it is singularly free of those small insidious and destructive kinds called vermin, there being neither badgers, martens, polecats, stoats, nor weazels, within its bounds. Foxes have been extirpated only in recent times. Hares and rabbits are plentiful, and seals and otters present themselves along the shores. Red deer are few in number; roes extinct. In regard to feathered game, grouse and black-cock are abundant, and ptarmigan occur among the stony steeps. Pheasants are thriving in the wooded environs of Brodick, and a few broods of partridges are to be met with in the lower grounds of the southern extremity. Eagles, hawks, and other birds of prey, are much less numerous now than formerly,

* Of coleopterous kinds, the best and most beautiful is a small golden beetle, *Chrysomela fulgida.* A dark-coloured butterfly, *Papilio blandina,* was first found in Arran, as a British species, but has since occurred plentifully in many other localities. An analogous species, *P. lygæa,* is also reported as an Arran species, although we are not aware that its capture there has been confirmed in later years.

in consequence of the premiums offered for their destruction. Reptiles, such as the adder, slow-worm, lizard, newt, frog, and toad, are more frequent than in many of the more distant western isles, some of which are entirely free from those lugubrious creatures.

The sea coasts of this magnificent island abound in fish,—cod, haddock, whiting, ling, mackerel, soles, flounders, turbot, skate, conger, and sethe. The ling and turbot are chiefly caught off the southern shores, where, indeed, the white fishery in general is the most pursued. It is believed that less is achieved in this productive department than might be, owing either to the difficulty of obtaining a regular and speedy market, or, it may be, to a constitutional want of enterprise. Indeed the turbot and other finer kinds are chiefly caught by fishermen from the coast of Ayrshire. An important herring fishery is prosecuted off the northern end of the island, and in the Sound of Kilbrennan, along its western shores. The period commences in July and continues to the end of November, but a preference is given to such as are cured in August and September. As Arran may be said to keep guard at the very mouth of

Loch Fine, so it is not to be wondered at that its fish partake of the excellence of those of that far-famed Firth, and that during the season Loch Ranza should be frequently a place of great resort. "Two or three hundred boats," Mr. Macbride informs us, "may often be seen lying at anchor, drying their nets in the bay; and seldom will a livelier sight be seen, than when in a summer evening they move simultaneously out of the Loch, separating as they advance, to shoot their nets on the fishing ground." Sea fishing being free to all, it is difficult to estimate the total captures off the Arran shores; but, viewing the matter merely in reference to the more restricted advantage drawn from it by the native population, the following has been given as an approximate calculation. In the gross annual produce of the parish of Kilbride, we find enumerated 2660 barrels of herrings, and of other fish 2900 imperial stones; while in that of Kilmorie the statement is "Herrings and white fish, caught by 60 boats, £35 each,—£2100. Shell fish and lobsters, £100." *

The lakes are well supplied with trout, and the

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xxvii., pp. 32 and 63.

streams produce both trout and eels. With a view to increase the size and improve the condition of the former, minnows (not indigenous to the island) were imported some years ago from Ayrshire,—probably in ignorance of the fact that all our finest lake trout of the mainland, are in no way remarkable as "tritons" of that diminutive species, but feed more beneficially, as well as fondly, on what Dr. Buckland would name *crustaceans* and *testaceans*, commonly called in Scotland screws and fresh-water buckies. Salmon and sea-trout ascend at times in numerous troops, when a *fresh* pervades the rivers; and (a rather unusual circumstance in still waters) there is occasionally good angling for salmon in Loch Iorsa, situate at no great distance from the central portion of the western shore. This king of fish begins to ascend the Arran streams in July, and often returns seawards as early as October. The supply, however, both of trout and salmon is less than it used to be at an earlier period of the present century, partly, it is said, owing to the deficient protection during close time, and partly to the agricultural use of lime. One of the best of the trouting lochs is that

called Tanna, at some distance from the coast, in the north-western district of the island.

Although crabs, lobsters, and other edible shell fish, are more or less distributed over all parts of the Arran coast, they are most numerous in the southern district near Pladda. We remember, during a former visit, being witness to what was to us a novel mode of catching crabs. We happened to be astir in a small boat in Brodick Bay about three o'clock one beautiful summer morning. Our chief object was to watch the soft uprising of those "fleecy folds, voluminous and vast," which during early twilight hours brood over the yet sombre vallies at the base of Goat-fell, and to watch the rosy tints as they descended from peak to peak, while

> "Fair Aurora, lifting up her head,
> All blushing rose from old Tithonus' bed."

But we soon perceived two men in a small craft, who seemed quite unconscious that

> "The flaming chariot of the world's great eye"

was now almost upon them. Their little boat hung motionless on the then waveless mirror of

the Bay, in about ten feet depth of water; and after for a minute or thereby, holding their faces close upon the surface, they seemed suddenly to pull a long pole out of the water, with something adhering to its extremity. We soon found that they were taking advantage of the glassy stillness of the water, to overlook the early walk of crabs. They no sooner saw these crusty crustaceans on the subaqueous sand, than they poked them behind with their long staves,—the crabs turned round to revenge the indignity, and, like Russian gens-d'armes, seized upon the unsuspecting poles. These latter were slightly shaken by the fishermen, as if in pain or terror; the angry creatures clung all the closer, and were then rapidly hoisted into the boat. The moral we drew at the time, and have since maintained was, that neither crab nor Christian should ever lose his temper. Oysters occur only in Loch Ranza.

To resume the courses of the Cutter. We passed Pladda about one o'clock. It is a low green island, with a couple of stationary lights on separate towers, the one considerably higher than the other. In the course of the afternoon we enjoyed one or two peeps, under a cloudy aspect, of Ailsa

Craig, a noted haunt of seafowl, the wild cries of which have probably deafened that huge rock, if there is truth in Burns's simile. During occasional lulls we cast out a few fishing-lines, but were unsuccessful—capturing only a single whiting. As we approached the coast of Cantyre, the wind which had been light throughout the day, almost totally died away, and we not only made no progress, but for a time rather lost ground by the contrary suction of the tide. It had been our intention to call as far south as Kildalig before entering the Bay of Campbeltown, but as we were likely to be rather late of gaining the actual coast, some of the younger and more active, if not impatient of the party, pushed off in the boat with four hands to row ashore, while the Secretary and our graver self resolved to "abide in the ship." We got close to Campbeltown about eleven, prior to which the boat and crew rejoined us, but without our more youthful and hilarious friends, who were to meet the Cutter by travelling along shore. The town lies in a beautiful semicircular bay, almost land-locked by two conical insular hills, which screen its mouth, and the background is sufficiently high and protecting, with the exception of

some low alluvial land stretching westwards in the direction of Machrihanish Bay. It is the opinion of some that this low portion was at one time covered by the waters of the sea, at which period what is now the Mull of Cantyre must of course have been an island. Campbeltown itself is noted in our ancient history, as having been (under the name of Dalruadhain,) the early capital of the Scottish kingdom, and the spot where the Scots settled on their descent from Ireland, although probably the only king who has entered its bay for some centuries is *Clupea alosa*, king of the herrings. It is still famous for its whisky.

We found a good fleet of boats in the bay, partly engaged in, but chiefly preparing for the herring fishery. Before retiring to rest, we went on deck to see how the weather promised for the ensuing day. It was now a beautiful summer midnight, extremely calm and still, with a few gleaming lights along the shore, and a peculiar musical *concerto* between sea and land, which we had never heard before. A shoal of porpoises was tumbling and blowing in the bay, while the dry monotonous *craik-craik* of the land-rail was as distinctly heard as if we had been anchored in the

middle of a clover field. We were told that it was only of late years that porpoises had ventured into those secluded waters. They seemed now extremely well acquainted with them, and came occasionally so close to our vessel, that, as one of the crew graphically observed, they might have "lashed our bottom with their tails." Our anxiety about our young friends was not relieved till towards six in the morning. Being strangers to the country, they had probably not calculated the extent or nature of the district over which they had to travel. They were however by no means much exhausted, as they had been very considerately entertained by the natives. Without going the length of a reprimand, we thought it right to request them not to ramble again so far from the Cutter towards night.

The 20th of June was a dismal day, like many others both before and since. The wind blew in angry gusts, and the rain deemed itself intermitting, merely because it varied from a heavy fall to a shower bath. Our weather has hitherto been unfavourable, and our deck but seldom dry; yet in the society of pleasant friends, and with the aid of many creature comforts, we bear up wonder-

fully, hoping for better and brighter prospects, and trying to console ourselves with the good which the country, that is the land, or *terra firma* portion of it, will assuredly gain from moisture milder than "mountain dew." The day continued so boisterous that we could neither conveniently go ashore to Campbeltown, nor yet take our departure from the sheltering bay.

The fishery officer who came on board here, repeated what we had previously heard, that considerable injury is supposed to be done to the spawning places of herrings and other sea-fish, by trawling off the Cantyre coasts for turbot. He also informed us that great complaints are made by the Campbeltown boatmen of injury caused by an injudicious fishery off the Ayrshire coast between Ballantrae and the Rock of Ailsa. Herrings are there caught in a useless and exhausted state in spring, and are frequently sent off to Ireland. The spawning beds are alleged to be disturbed and injured. He had seen, only a day or two ago, two of these herrings just about to spawn; while the majority of those captured in the Cantyre district are in the more delicate state of *matties*, a term

bestowed on such as have not yet approached the spawning period. This disparity of condition during the same season of the year shows, at all events, over how long a time the spawning state extends in different individuals of this invaluable species. We found that there were from 150 to 200 boats lying in the bay, many of them Irish. None, however, had as yet had a *take* of more than 2000 fish, which we presume would scarcely measure more than three crans; but, as they were at this time selling for ten shillings a hundred, the profit even on that small quantity would be considerable.*

Although the afternoon continued rough and rainy, we got under weigh about four o'clock, with the intention of running over to the Ayrshire coast. But after tacking about for several hours with a head wind and a heavy sea, we determined to make for Mauchry Bay, on the western shore of Arran. This bay, though by no means land-locked, affords good anchorage, and sufficient shelter, when the

* A cran is a measure equal to 45 gallons, and may contain from six to eight hundred herrings, according to their size.

wind is off shore. The view is an expanded one, with a fine mountain outline rising landwards all around.

We got again under weigh about four in the morning of the 21st June, and beat across to the coast of Ayr. Our indefatigable Secretary landed at Dunure to inspect a harbour there, built by Mr. Kennedy, and said to have cost that gentleman about £12,000. It is now in a state of considerable dilapidation,—the breakwater being demolished, the sea-wall or parapet washed away, and the entrance partially filled up with rubbish. When in proper order, vessels of eight feet draught of water could enter, but now it is difficult even at half-tide for skiffs to pass either in or out. Its efficient repair would be desirable (although it might cost a heavy sum), as it is probably of considerable advantage to the white fisheries. There were about twenty good boats lying inside, of the skiff description, but not of a nature to fit them for the usual herring fishing. This harbour is prettily situated.

The old Castle of Dunure, in ruins, rises boldly from its rocky foundations to the south. It was in a secret chamber of this ancient pile that Allan

DUNURE CASTLE.

Stewart, abbot of Crossraguel (in the 16th century), was nearly roasted to death by Gilbert, Earl of Cassillis, who desired to obtain from him his subscription to certain deeds, resigning some valuable Church property in his favour. The serrated peaks of Arran, and Ailsa's more lonely sea-surrounded mountain, give grandeur to the distant view.

Some good salmon streams *debouche* upon the Ayrshire coast, and the Doon is remarkable as one

of the *earliest* rivers in the west of Scotland. Fine clean fresh-run fish occur in it by Christmas time, and increase in number as the season advances; but, as the present Act continues the close time until the 1st of February, this bounty of Nature is of no avail. It has been observed as a singular and unaccountable circumstance, that the river Ayr which is close at hand, and may therefore be presumed to exist under the same climatic influences, is rather characterised by the lateness of its produce,—few salmon being captured there before the beginning of June. We doubt not that the difference arises from the fact, that the Doon draws its waters from numerous lakes. The erection of dam (ned) dykes, the establishment of manufactories, and other innovations of recent times, have greatly deteriorated the fisheries of these streams.* The influence of peculiar manu-

* This is matter of experience by the present generation;—but that this fine fish was almost superabundant on the Ayrshire coast in former times, is evident from certain printed regulations regarding the poors'-house of Ayr, established in 1759. It is there directed that *salmon* should form the diet of the paupers twice every week.—See *New Statistical Account*, No. xvi., p. 51. No doubt in those days the entire absence of regular and rapid

factures on fishes in fresh water is well illustrated by the fact, that trout-fishing was at one time almost totally destroyed over a large extent of the upland portion of the river Ayr, by the action of the tar-works at Muirkirk. These have since been discontinued, and now the angler is again rewarded by a fuller creel.

Another excellent salmon river of this county joins the sea at Ballantrae, and rejoices in the name of Stinchar. It is, like the Ayr, a late river; for although the fishing opens in February the tacksmen or tenants never work it till towards the end of April, and even then "not one fish in twenty is worth keeping." It closes in the middle of September, at which time the fish are still in good condition, and equal to those of any other month except the end of July and beginning of August. These, and many other local facts, show the difficulties which beset any general principle of legislation on the subject of the salmon fisheries. There is a good deal done by means of bag-nets along these Ayrshire shores, and not a little liti-

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modes of transmission would necessarily occasion more frequent gluts.

gious disputation connected with the same. Salmon also ascend the river Girvan, and it may be stated as an interesting, though not now necessary confirmation of Mr. Shaw's views, that parr are never found up that river beyond the falls of Tarelaw Linn.

The white fishery off the Ayrshire coast has probably been injured by the rivalry of the Highland shores, and the facilities which these latter now enjoy in having their produce carried off by steam-boats to the larger cities. The sea is here, however, actually less productive than it used to be, for while 120 stone of mixed fish was by no means an unusual capture for one boat in a single day, 70 stone is now reckoned a great catch, and the average brought to Ayr market during even the best of seasons, does not exceed 12 stone per boat. It is certain that herring do not frequent this portion of our western shores so abundantly as of old, and it seems an established fact that wherever that fish either decreases or abounds, a corresponding scarcity or increase of other kinds is apt to follow.* Not a few of the Ayrshire

* In the minutes of session, or ecclesiastical record, of an Ayr-

fishermen, however, have now settled permanently in distant localities, which were formerly only their occasional resort. Although herrings are frequently caught in Saltcoats Bay, the boats, both of that place and of Ardrossan, usually cross over to the more productive Highland shores. In connection with the cod and ling fishery they even proceed as far as Barra, and other islands of the outer Hebrides. Herrings are often numerous not far from Ballantrae, and there is a good white fishery there, both of cod and turbot.

Taking our course southwards, our object was to make Loch Ryan, but the wind was right a-head, and plenty of it. Culzean Castle seemed a magnificent place, with umbrageous far-spread woods, and a fine natural site. The day now became wet and very stormy. We made a long stretch westwards, and then weathered "the Craig," leaving to the leeward a large barque, which we had seen far a-head some time before. We now

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shire parish, to which the herring fishing is now of little comparative importance, it was resolved, on 18th June 1718, that the sacrament "behoved to be before the middle of July, because of the herring fishers."

drew in our bow-sprit, which had been plunging its snout at every lurch into the sea, lowered our topmast, hoisted the storm-jib, and took in two reefs of the mainsail, in the course of which operations our mate was unfortunately disabled by a severe blow, occasioned by the breaking loose of the jib-sheet during a squall. He lost his hat for ever, and the use of one arm for several days. One of the crew, a thorough seaman, who was required to ascend for a time to the cross-trees, was so affected by the violence of the motion, that on descending he became as sick as a land-rail. But the Princess Royal behaved herself splendidly; and although sea and sky were commingled in one drenching mass of moisture, the briny surge bounding over us from stem to stern, and the lee scuppers gurgling under water,

"Like some strong swimmer in his agony,"

the captain rubbed his hands with delight, and declared he had never seen so dry a vessel! It might be so.

After "a stormy night and dark, had closed a gloomy day," we cast anchor in the mouth of Loch Ryan, about four in the morning of the 22d, and

ere long obtaining a pilot from the coast-guard station, we ran up to Stranraer. Many kinds of white fish are found in this far-stretching inland bay, but for many years back it has been almost entirely forsaken by herring. Yet it was at one time famous for that fish. The clergyman of the parish observes, "I have heard old people say that they have known 300 sail-boats in the bay at one time, which had come from the Highlands and other places, in order to fish or purchase herrings." Indeed, even the white fish have decreased in quantity, and haddocks especially, which about 30 years ago were good and plentiful, are now of rare occurrence. Excellent oysters are found on a sandy bank called the Scar, which projects from a promontory of the western shore. There is a good deal of cultivation on both sides, but little wood. On the left, we passed Cairnryan (the seat of General Sir Alexander Wallace, a distinguished Peninsular officer), and on the right, the dwelling of Mr. Carrick Moore, the brother of the hero of Corunna.

We had now for a few days to throw off the character of

"Rude and boisterous Captains of the sea,"

while enjoying the more sumptuous hospitalities of Culhorn, or rambling along the umbrageous terraced slopes of Castle-Kennedy.

Culhorn is little more than a couple of miles from Stranraer, and most part of the distance is taken up by a long well-wooded avenue. The dwelling house itself is rather an odd-looking irregular building, chiefly of brick, and more easily imagined than described. It still bears something of the semblance of what it once actually was—a barrack for soldiers. When Marshal Stair resided in Castle-Kennedy (where he is said to have laid out the plantations in military order), he here quartered his regiment of horse, and when the former fine building was accidentally destroyed by fire, he took up his abode in the barracks, which his successors have altered and increased in various ways. The principal public rooms are now sufficiently large and lofty. Although the general aspect of the immediate grounds in its essential character is not particularly picturesque, yet the expanded portions of smooth mown lawn, the thick clusters of lofty evergreens and thriving rhododendrons, and the more distant ranges of sheltering forest trees, with gleaming peeps of natural water,

produce a somewhat imposing effect. Great damage, however, was done several years ago, by the late Earl cutting down much of the oldest and most valuable timber.

But the chief beauty and interest of the vicinity, consist in the old ruins of Castle-Kennedy, which are placed upon a rather lofty and peninsular piece of land, almost surrounded by two natural lakes connected by an artificial cut, over which the buildings are approached from the southwards by a bridge. This peninsular ground is laid out in terraces, cut from the natural banks, in a very varied form, and though in strict accordance with the ancient artificial school, yet affording a great diversity of verdant walks o'er level platforms and descending slopes. Here also the axe of the fell destroyer has done its fatal work; but many magnificent avenues of trees remain, radiating in straight lines from the Castle, and leading up to it from various points along the terraced shores. The view from these forest glades of the surrounding wooded knolls, with portions of the gleaming lake on either side interrupted by masses of wood, and thus broken into separate portions, all subservient to the crowning keep of the ancient Castle,

forms a fine picture, and one of a peculiar kind from the great extent of the terraced walks. The farther distance perhaps wants character, owing to the hill country consisting rather of long continuous ranges of upraised land than of mountains properly so called, and there is a deficiency of wood in the background, but all the nearer features are excellent. The Castle itself is extensive, consisting, as usual, of a lofty square tower and various irregular slope-roofed buildings. The walls are still in most respects tenaciously strong, and would assuredly bear a greater weight than the colony of chattering jackdaws which inhabit their highest pinnacles. The present Earl seems very much interested in the question of the possible restoration of the Castle to a habitable state, and meanwhile spares no expense in laying out the walks, &c. according to their ancient fashion, so far as that can be ascertained. But we fear that the ancestral trees can now be restored no more for ever.*

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* The intelligent factor, Mr. Guthrie, informed us that the peninsular piece of ground on which the Castle stands, contains 71 acres. The Black, or western Loch, consists of 123 acres, —the White, or eastern, of 119.

Castle-Kennedy is supposed to have been built in the time of James VI. It belonged originally to the Cassilis family, who in former times were great landowners in Wigtonshire.

"'Twixt Wigton and the town of Ayr,
Portpatrick and the cruives of Cree,
No man needs think for to bide there,
Unless he court with Kennedie."

It passed to the family of the present noble proprietor in the time of Charles II., and was burned by accident in 1715, since which period it has not been repaired or inhabited. There are, at least, a dozen lochs in the parish, of which those of Castle-Kennedy and Soulseat are the most notable. The latter was formerly called the Green Loch, on account of its being thickly covered at certain seasons by a floating vegetation, and even the ancient Abbey on its banks (of which the foundations are still traceable near the Manse), was known under the name of *Monasterium viridis stagni*, although the more spiritual title of Soulseat (*Sedes animarum*,) has been handed down by a grateful posterity.

"On a calm summer evening," says the Rev. James Fergusson, "the banks of the Loch of

Soulseat present an appearance not a little curious. What seem to be pillars of cloud, appear here and there, rising to a height of fifty feet or more. A stranger viewing them at a distance might suppose them to consist of vapour or smoke; but, on a nearer approach, they are found to consist of living creatures, engaged in ceaseless action, performing the most graceful evolutions; and on listening will be heard the rush of their little wings, and the piping of their tiny voices. These flies have, I believe, their nativity in the water, from which they emerge to an ephemeral existence in the region of the air. One species goes through a very singular process, that of throwing off the skin. They fix themselves to a tree or bush, or any resting-place, and literally crawl out of their skin; and, having left behind them their *exuviæ*, hie themselves off with freshened agility to their ærial dance. On remaining for a short time by the water-edge, I have found myself covered with the filmy skins of these gay ephemeræ." * The Minister has well observed an interesting fact in the natural history of these insects. The species

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xxi., p. 83.

to which he alludes is *Ephemera albipennes* of systematic writers. It is remarkable, as its specific name implies, for the whiteness of its wings;, and it sometimes rises and falls in such vast quantities by the banks of lakes and rivers, as to thicken the air and whiten the surface of the ground, reminding one, even in the verdurous and leafy summer, of

"The flaky weight of winter's purest snow."

Although strictly ephemeral in their final state, they have even a more extended term of life than usual in their subaqueous abodes, where they are said to live (in the condition of larvæ) for two or three years. Having remained for a time in the intermediate state of nymph, they become ripe for their final transformation, and leave the water as winged insects. But even after this, the singular characteristic (above described) still awaits them, being one from which the other tribes are free. Although apparently in the perfect state, they immediately proceed to cast off a slender envelope or skin, including that even of the limbs, eyes, setæ, and antennæ,—on which account Mr. Curtis has named their condition, before throwing off

this delicate slough, as that of the *pseud-imago*. While following the delightful pursuit of angling, both along our own unrivalled streams, and by the banks of foreign waters, we have frequently had our hat and fishing-pannier covered by a pearly layer of these ghost-like exuviæ, and it proved extremely interesting to witness what we had so often previously studied in the pages of Swammerdam, Réaumur, and Degeer. The angler recognises these and other ephemeræ under the name of May-flies, and attempted imitations of them are regarded by many as an extremely successful lure in Spring.

Of the Wigtonshire lochs we angled only in the two connected ones of Castle-Kennedy, and were unsuccessful, capturing (even with the aid of C.C.H.) merely three poorish trouts. The heavens, however, were brewing something, for they bore above us and northwards, the colour of a copper kettle, and ere long,

"Sky lower'd, and mutter'd thunder."

Any thing serves as an excuse when one's skill is foiled. Numerous waterfowl occur in this district, and we observed a Merlin (a rare breeding bird

in Scotland), fly from the second story of an old silver-fir on the peninsular portion of the Castle grounds. The larger beasts of prey, such as foxes, wild-cats, and badgers, are said to have entirely disappeared, although the polecat and weazel are still well known. The Stair estates in this district of Scotland are now of great extent, stretching out some fifty miles without let or hindrance. The land which extends for a space of about six miles, between Loch Ryan and Luce Bay, is singularly low and flat, though the natural fore-shortening is now screened by plantations and groves of trees. While the waters of Castle-Kennedy discharge themselves northwards, those of a smaller lake in the immediate neighbourhood, on the right hand side of the high road, flow southwards, although there is no marked elevation between the two. Thus a slight rise of the sea would detach the Rhinns of Galloway (as the peninsular portion of the county is often called,) from the mainland, and form an island of all that portion which extends from Corsewell light to the Mull of Galloway.

We drove one morning with Colonel Blair, (a Waterloo officer, who had just returned from the

agreeable and gratifying duty of dining with *the* Duke, on the anniversary of the great day,) as far as his estate of Dunskey, near Portpatrick, and some eight or ten miles from Culhorn. A great portion of the higher ground between it and Stranraer seemed rather wildly cultivated, presenting a good deal of a north-of-Ireland aspect, though, no doubt, in the course of improvement. There was little or no wood visible, but the old Place of Garthland, recently purchased by Lord Stair, showed some good timber at some distance to the left. It must be both old and fine, if we may judge from a specimen of felled ash which we saw upon the quay at Stranraer, and of which the diameter could not have been less than from three to four feet. The style of farming greatly improved as we approached Dunskey, and we soon found ourselves under the shelter of extensive and very thriving plantations. The mansion-house, though of irregular form and unimposing exterior (having been built by various proprietors, from time to time, in accordance with no preconceived plan), is within doors both elegant and commodious. *C'est un maison bien meublé*, and the cellar excellent.

We proceeded on foot to inspect the grounds. We were certainly surprised when first informed that scarcely a tree existed here five-and-twenty years ago, except a few planted by the late Sir James Hunter Blair; and now, notwithstanding its vicinity to a bold and rocky shore, and unscreened exposure to the ocean blasts, there are from four to five hundred acres of excellent and even vigorous plantations. But, as the Secretary pointed out, with his accustomed perception both of the useful and the picturesque, a great advantage is gained by the ground being, though high, yet varied by numerous deep and sheltering hollows, between the prevailing elevated ranges. On the seaward side, a lively brook finds its way down a deep romantic glen, which presents, at certain points, the characters of a rocky ravine or dingle, with a silvery fall of water, encompassed by tangled banks richly covered with ivy, honeysuckle, and the more gorgeous fox-glove. Walks in winding almost labyrinthic order, connected on either side by the slender span of a rustic bridge, conduct from point to point, and the stream, after brawling its way down the rocky glen, pursues a more quiet course for a few hundred yards, and then sinks

into the sea, in a small recess called Port-Kale Bay, a little northwards of Portpatrick. The strand of this bay is composed of coarse gravel, the debris of the surrounding whinstone, and is separated by a small promontory from another bay, called Port-Murray, the shore of which consists of pure yellow sand. In this latter, at no remote period, there was an excellent salmon fishery, not fewer than 170 having been captured at one draught, though now-a-days nothing is to be taken but sea-trout. We were asked the probable reason of this change, and of course were unable to tell,—which is one great advantage of being what is called a practical naturalist.

In relation to the general fisheries of this portion of the coast, it may be observed that the capture of herrings has been abandoned since the withdrawal of the bounty. From 1813 to 1821, about 20 boats and 100 men were employed in the Portpatrick herring fishery, each boat using from 1200 to 1600 yards of net, and averaging a profit of £80. The greater number of these fish were caught between Portpatrick and Portnessock, at a distance of from two to three miles from shore, and the usual fishing season was in midsummer,

from the commencement of June to the beginning of August. It was the prevailing belief that they then proceeded southwards to the Isle of Man, where the fishery began about the 10th of August. In those days 120 herring boats, assembled from different quarters, have been seen together in Portpatrick harbour. As soon as the herring fishery was discontinued, that for cod commenced upon a systematic plan, and was chiefly carried on from November to the end of March. "In the beginning of the fishing season," observes the Rev. Andrew Urquhart, "they are caught in water about 30 fathoms deep, and towards the end of the season in water about 60 fathoms. They are supposed to seek the deeper water in order to avoid the strong current, as they become weaker from the approach of the time of spawning, which is in April and May. The distance of the cod fishing ground from the shore is from two to three miles. The lines used in fishing are from 800 to 1000 fathoms, having hooks along the whole length, at the distance of two fathoms, and are stretched along the bottom by large stones let down at each end, and fastened by a cord to a buoy on the surface of the water. The bait used is the shell-fish *Buccinum undatum*,

called hen buckie, which is caught for the purpose in baskets, containing pieces of fish, which are let down in about ten fathoms water, about a quarter of a mile off the harbour or the old Castle, and are drawn up daily to be emptied of the shell-fish which have crept into them to feed on the dead fish. Each shell serves to bait two hooks; so that, reckoning the number of hooks used by all the boats at 4500, about 2250 of these large shell-fish must be destroyed every time the lines are shot, and probably not fewer than 70,000 every year. Yet the supply, chiefly obtained from a space of no great extent, seems to be even more abundant than ever." *

We observed that the young plantations to which we have alluded, failed in some measure as they approach the sea. Of the fir tribe by far the hardiest is the pineaster. It was first planted in Wigtonshire about 70 years ago by the Earl of Galloway, who recommended it as most capable of resisting the influence of the sea breezes, and experience has justified his expectation.† It would

* *New Statistical Account*, No xxi., p. 151.

† *Loc. cit.*, p. 116.

be well to try sycamore and elders (not of the Church of Scotland, but), *Sambucus nigra*, both of which thrive well along our coasts. Of other trees which have been cultivated here with some success, we may name the elm, oak, and ash. Besides the pineaster, the spruce and silver firs make progress, but the larch and Scotch firs have proved a failure. Vegetation, in general, is said to be slow in early spring, but rapid during summer, so that the harvests "are usually completed about the middle of October." The young shoots of trees, however, are often found in November unprepared for those upheaving storms which saturate their succulent parts with salt sea spray, and not seldom cause a considerable portion of their tops to perish.

We returned to the dwelling house of Dunskey, by the side of a piece of water of about four acres, which has been lately formed into a fish-pond, and stocked with trout and minnows. The latter were brought from Ayrshire, not being natives of the parish, in which, however, they will speedily acquire a right by residence, if not in the meantime swallowed by the former, which is probably the proprietor's view. There is no natural lake in

this district, but the trout of the burns are said to be of good flavour.* We may conclude the parish business of Portpatrick by observing, that although we really did our best to look about us, yet it rained so unceasingly as almost to wash the very spectacles from off our nose; and although we inspected in a most patient spirit the thriving woods and picturesque ravine, an ingenious ice-house, and a well-constructed pond, the pleasantest

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* We observe it stated in the Statistical Account that the gamekeeper at Dunskey thinks there are two distinct species of weazel hereabouts. The one, much smaller than the other, seldom attacks animals bigger than mice or small birds, while the larger seizes rabbits. We have no doubt that the former is the weazel properly so called, while the latter is the stoat, or British ermine, in its summer coat. In the same account it is said, "A bird frequent among the jackdaws, which the gamekeeper has not seen elsewhere, is described by him as rather larger, with very fine jet-black plumage, bill and legs red, building its nest in dry holes in rocks and caves." This is a well-known bird, commonly called the Cornish Chough, or red legged crow,—*Pyrrhocorax graculus*, Temminck, of rather restricted distribution on the mainland of Scotland, but of more frequent occurrence in several of the western isles. We may here add, that a rare coleopterous insect, the rose beetle, *Cetonia aurata*, is found in this county. The glow-worm, *Lampyris noctiluca*, is said to be plentiful in the glen to the north of Portpatrick.

things we saw throughout the day were a blazing fire and a superexcellent lunch. We tried the experiment of drinking champagne out of Bohemian glass, and the Claude Lorraine effect, so rich and glowing, was much to be admired, and cannot be too frequently imitated in raw and gusty weather.

It need scarcely be observed that steam navigation has been of essential service to Wigtonshire in general. That mode of communication now exists between her principal ports and Liverpool and Whitehaven, in addition to the intercourse with Glasgow from Stranraer. These open a quick and ready market both for grain and live stock, and for ready money, at the current prices; whereas, in former times, sales were scarcely ever met by cash. Travelling corn-dealers bought up the grain (by bills) with a view of shipment to the English market, and being seldom men of capital, and their trade precarious, a greater proportion became bankrupt than in almost any other class. Those who purchased cattle, to drive for sale to England, were much in the same predicament, and likewise payed by means of bills. Hence the Wigtonshire farmers were frequently exposed

to risk, and not seldom suffered the severest losses. But steam navigation has entirely changed the condition of affairs. At the same time, as no human invention is perfect in all its relative consequences, some counteracting disadvantages have since ensued. Portpatrick is no longer the entrance to the highway from Ireland to England, the steamers plying direct to Liverpool or Holyhead. The importation both of black cattle and horses has also much diminished. It appears from the "Statistical Account," that the number of that kind of stock landed from Ireland at Portpatrick in the year 1812, was 20,000, while in 1837 it amounted to not more than 1080.*

During our residence at Culhorn, the Secretary made a short journey southwards into Ayrshire, to inspect the site of a proposed harbour at Ballantrae. He found the country extensively cultivated along the Loch Ryan shore, the soil light, farms small, land indifferently cleaned, potatoes in lazy beds, and lime put on at this season, as in Ireland. The lime itself is brought from the Sister Isle, and

* See "General Observations on the County of Wigton," in No. xxi., p. 221.

there seems to be neither coal nor freestone in the country. The spades, shovels, and other implements of manual labour, are of an inefficient kind. The general shore is rather flat and sandy, till it approaches the parish of Ballantrae, where it assumes a more rocky and precipitous character. A green artificial hill or mound was observed, obviously an ancient Law-Ting, or Hill of Justice. The farm of Innermessan is the site of the ancient Rerigonium, a city of the Novantes, from which the modern Loch Ryan was named *Rerigonis sinus*. The wood around Cairn-Ryan has a *shaved up* aspect, from the sweeping winds; but it improves as the ground recedes towards the base of the backward hill, or retires into the more sheltering glen. On nearing the mouth of Loch Ryan, the road turns towards the right, into the long-withdrawn Glenapp, which is adorned with a fair covering of ash and other trees, apparently of natural growth. The glen itself appears well adapted to the growth of timber. A rather bleak-looking hill at its upper extremity is the property of Lord Orkney, who seems endeavouring to clothe it with larch, and has moreover succeeded in building some lodges of a rather curious construction,

ARDSTINCHAR CASTLE, NEAR BALLANTRAE, AYRSHIRE.

one of them intended, we believe, for a shooting-box, resembling a Tuscan fortalice.

Ballantrae is a small maritime village at the mouth of the Stinchar, which is there over-spanned by a bridge of three arches. On a rocky hill above it stand the picturesque ruins of the Castle of Ard-Stinchar. In relation to the proposed harbour, the Secretary seemed to think that all that was required was a single pier to form a shelter from the south-west gales. The foundation would be rock, and a good deal of excavation of that material might be necessary inside. The water deepens immediately beyond the proposed pier-head, and boats could take it even at ebb-tide. There are from twenty-five to thirty boats in this quarter, and plenty of fish of various kinds. The men say that besides the improper capture (to which we have already alluded) of spawning fish in spring, plenty of herrings in good condition are caught here during the proper season, though more frequently by people from Ireland and elsewhere, than themselves. A considerable quantity of cod is also captured, and cured for the Glasgow and other markets; and, if a harbour

were formed, it might be the means of encouraging a general fishery of increased importance.

In an ancient vault, a remnant of the former Church of Ballantrae, there is a curious antique monument, with the recumbent effigies of a Lord and Lady Bargeny, who lived in Ard-Stinchar Castle in times of old. The Baron is represented as in scale armour.

It was now our duty to withdraw from the hospitalities of Culhorn, which we did with regret. We were particularly pleased with one of the social features of the establishment. While the newspapers (on the eve of a general election) teemed with the acrimonious disputations of the great contending parties, and Stranraer itself, as well as the County of Wigton, was the field at that moment of keen political contention, in which the rival candidates were endeavouring to plant themselves, by supplanting each other, all met together here at dinner in the evening, in friendly cheerfulness. While Colonel Blair, and others, constituted a strong party on the Conservative side of the County, we had Captain Dalrymple (of the Fusilier Guards), the expectant, and as

it proved, successful candidate on the Whig interest; Colonel Vans Agnew, the Tory contester of the Burghs, reposed from canvassorial labour with Sir John M'Taggart, the Liberal candidate for the same;—to say nothing of the courtesy shown to the Secretary and ourself, both somewhat tinged with the prevailing doctrines of the Radical school.

CHAPTER II.

MULL OF CANTYRE—IRISH COAST—ISLAND OF RACHLIN—GIANT'S CAUSEWAY—ISLAND OF ISLAY—SOUND OF ISLAY—JURA—COLONSAY—ORONSAY—THE SKERRY VORE—TIREE—THE TREISHNISH AND OTHER ISLES—STAFFA.

We left Stranraer at a very early hour on the morning of the 26th June, with a fair wind and a wet sail, and had a fine run to the Mull of Cantyre. Here we had a good opportunity of observing, that although light-houses placed at a considerable elevation, are necessarily seen from a greater distance, yet the fogs which so often hang upon the sides of mountains, are a serious counteraction to what would otherwise be of great advantage. A heavy mass of dense vapour covered the Mull from its summit almost to the base, and shrouded the light-house in its misty veil, but the lower portion, close upon the shore, was comparatively free from such incumbrance.*

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*. The light-room is 240 feet above the medium level of the sea.

The name of Cantyre is derived, we believe, from a Gaelic compound, signifying the head of the land, and the addition of Mull implies the *bald* head of the same.* The district was inhabited by the Epidii of the Romans, and its southern portion was anciently named *Epidium Promontorium.* From its almost insular character, it was long regarded as pertaining to the Macdonalds, Lords of the Isles, one of whom, in the 12th century, caused a boat in full sail to be drawn across the narrow neck of land at Tarbert, with a view to render his princely power the more absolute or undisputed.† The

* Maol (*substantive*), means a promontory; maol (*adjective*), signifies bald.

† This boat feat seems to have been a favourite expedient, put in practice both before and after the time above alluded to (1193). "It is the opinion of many," says Pennant, "that these little isthmuses, so frequently styled Tarbat, in North Britain, took their name from the above circumstance—*tarruing* signifying to draw, and *bata*, a boat. This, too, might be called, by way of pre-eminence, the Tarbat, from a very singular circumstance related by Torfæus. When Magnus, the bare-footed King of Norway, obtained from Donald Bane of Scotland, the cession of the Western Isles, or all those places that could be surrounded in a boat, he added to them the peninsula of Cantyre by this fraud; he placed himself in the stern of a boat, held the rudder, was drawn over this narrow track, and by this species of navigation

Macdonalds succumbed to the Campbells in the time of James V., when that monarch granted

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wrested the country from his brother monarch."—*Scotland*, p. 190. So also Robert Bruce, according to Barbour, travelled once in a similar manner by the same route, which, however, could scarcely be rougher than the poet's rhymes.

" But to King Robert will we gang,
That we have left unspoken of lang,
When he had convoyed to the sea
His brother Edward, and his menyie,
And other men of great noblay,
To Tarbat they held their way,
In galleys ordained for their fare,
But them worth draw their ships there,
And a mile was betwixt the seas,
And that was lompynt all with trees.
The King his ships there gert draw ;
And for the wind couth stoutly blaw
Upon their back, as they would ga,
He gert men rops and masts ta,
And set them in the ships high,
And sails to the tops tye :
And gert men gang thereby drawing.
The wind them help'd that was blawing,
So that, in little space,
Their fleet all over drawn was.

" And when they that in the isles were
Heard tell how the King had there,

Cantyre to the family of Argyll. Our object this day was to make straight for Loch-in-daal, in the island of Islay, but the wind had now not only lulled, but gone round a-head, and as the tide soon after caught us, we were drawn fast away in a westerly direction towards the Irish coast, which we had seen all morning looming at us through the cloudy sky. We had ere long a fine view of a magnificent rocky promontory, with a crest like a king's diadem, called Fairhead, the most north-eastern point of Ireland. There was now a pleasant breeze, and merely a rippling motion on the sea,—the clouds were high in heaven,—and every thing gave promise of a splendid evening, all the more beautiful after so dull a day. The wind was not quite fair for Islay, but entirely so for the

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Gart his ships with sails go
Out over betwixt Tarbat two,
They were abaysit so utterly,
For they wist, through old prophecy,
That he should gar ships so
Betwixt the seas with sails go,
Should win the isles so till hand,
That none with strength should him withstand."

BARBOUR'S *Bruce*, vol. iii., b. xv., p. 14.

coast of Antrim and the Giant's Causeway. When the Secretary heard that his companions on board had never seen that wonder of the world, he kindly requested Captain Stewart to bear away in the direction of Ballintoy, our doing so in fact being no loss of time, as we could not by possibility attain

"To the green Islay's fertile shore,"

before the close of day. So, instead of proceeding northwards, we took our course due west, between the Antrim coast and the curious island of Rachlin.

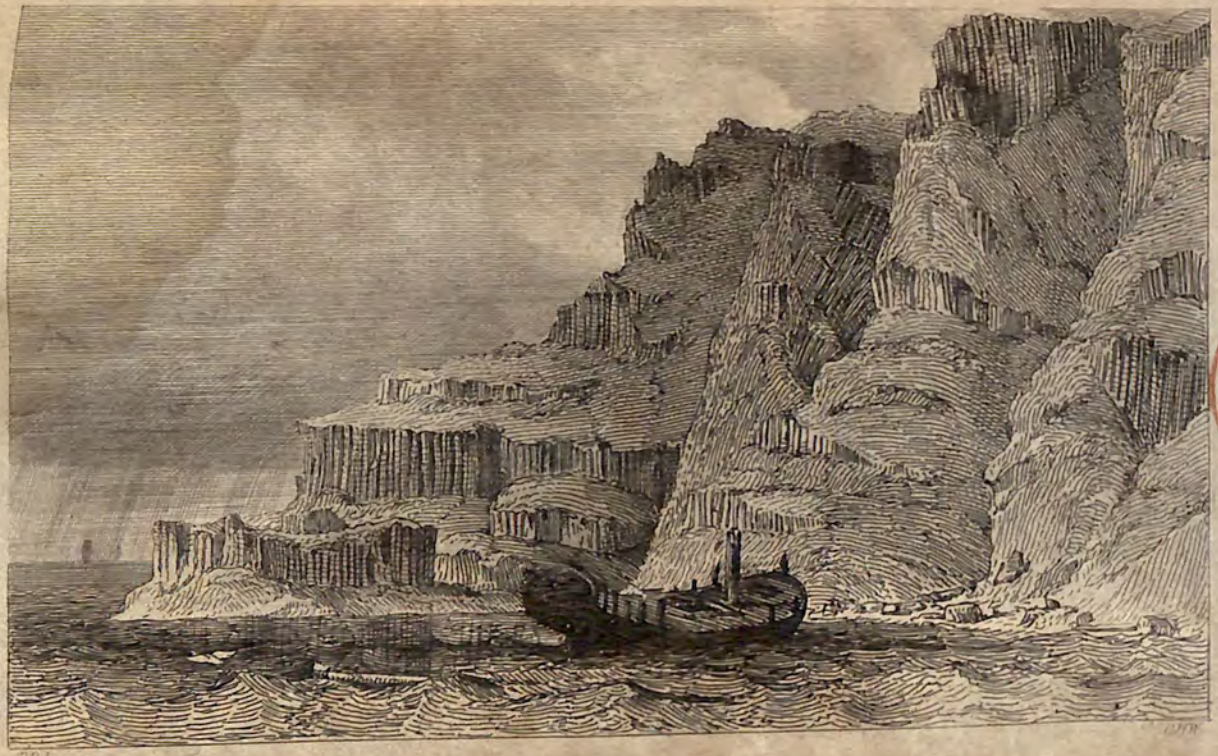
It was in this island that Robert Bruce ("wha Scots has often led") lived for some time before his descent upon Scotland,* and many perilous

* "Accordingly, with the remnant of his followers, Bruce embarked for Rath-Erin, or Rachrine, the Recina of Ptolemy, a small island lying almost opposite to the shores of Ballycastle, on the coast of Ireland. The islanders at first fled from their new and armed guests, but upon some explanation submitted themselves to Bruce's sovereignty. He resided among them until the approach of spring (1306), when he again returned to Scotland, with the desperate resolution to reconquer his kingdom, or perish in the attempt. The progress of his success, from its commencement to its completion, forms the brightest period in Scottish history."—*Note to Lord of the Isles.*

descents are still made within its own rocky barrier, for although the people of one portion of it are fishermen, those of another are what are called *rockmen*, and subsist, in a great measure, like the natives of St. Kilda, by collecting sea-fowl and their eggs. We passed not far from several detached rocks along the shore, of great height, and extremely precipitous, and these were covered, we may say, with millions of birds,—sea-gulls, guillemots, puffins, &c.,—all sitting in rows along the rocky ledges, or in broader congregations on the grassy summits, where, at a short distance, the gulls especially looked as numerous and as gay as gowans in a field. Towards evening thousands more were seen winging their way from all directions towards these favourite roosting-places. The scene by which we were at this time surrounded was very striking. The western sea was all alive, and sparkling like molten gold, the bold coast of Antrim reflected a ruddy glare from the light of the descending sun, hundreds of fishing-boats were out along the shores, Rachlin island partly in deep shadow, partly catching the enlivening rays upon its higher peaks, and the huge Mull of Cantyre in the far distance closing up the sombre eastern view,

all these formed a sea picture worthy of long endurance, which it will be pleasant to recall to mind in after times.

As we neared the Giant's Causeway, the cliffs along shore exhibited a distinct columnar aspect, the upper portion or crest of the coast being, as it were, supported by gigantic pillars, and these pillars, however strong and enduring, being each composed of many separate joints or pieces, built up one upon another. They do not adhere in any way together, but merely rest mechanically upon each other, and are easily detachable when sufficient force is applied. The Giant's Causeway, properly so called, is by no means the most conspicuous feature of the scene, when first viewed from an approaching vessel. It is the great columnar cliffs, the rocky bays, and here and there a tall aspiring crag, shooting up like a piece of church extension, which give character to this singular coast. But on landing on what seems a flattened point or promontory, the wonderful structure of the Causeway is at once apparent, and is truly admirable. The whole of this promontory is paved with, or rather composed of huge flat-crowned stones, all fitting into each other most beautifully,



TAYLOR ... MARINE SOCIETY

some being nearly quadrangular, many six-sided like the comb of the honey-bee, while others are regular octagons of the most perfect form. Among all these millions of causeway crowns, not a hair's-breadth of space seems lost, for wherever there is any tendency to irregularity, in consequence of one stone having a smaller lateral face than usual, then its next neighbour meets it with a face of the exact same size. Although some are a little higher than others, and there is an occasional ascending step to a loftier range, yet there is on the whole so much uniformity of structure on this portion, that one can walk or even run upon it with great facility. As the whole slopes upwards from the sea, by the time you have walked inland a few hundred yards, you find yourself raised above the level of the adjoining bay on either side, and the exposed lateral portion is itself composed of beautiful columnar ranges, all formed of separate pieces placed upon each other. It is, in fact, the tops of millions of these columnar pieces which form the great causeway, although it is only on the exposed perpendicular portions of the *pier*, as one may call it, that the more lengthened columnar structure is perceptible.

In many parts of the Causeway you can distinguish, by a freshness in the colour, wherever joints of stone have been lifted out of their sockets and carried off as trophies, either by fools or philosophers. This is by no means a praiseworthy practice, although so bountiful is nature in this magnificent piece of Macadamizing, that every F. G. S. and A. S. S. in existence might obtain his portion, without materially changing the aspect of the scene. Yet, as a general measure, vagrants should be checked in that spirit of spoliation, which is injurious to the integrity of their own character, if not offensive to the majesty of nature. We thought the natives were by no means disinclined to carry on a traffic in this merchandise, but we gave them no encouragement so to do.

On the hill side, just above the grand Causeway, the same structure prevails, with this difference, that the pillars lie horizontally, with their heads sticking, as it were, out of the *brae*, the surface of their crowns being of course perpendicular. As these horizontal pillars are also composed of many joints, there must be some risk of the more exposed or outer one sometime rolling downwards, as the surrounding soil in which it previously lay imbed-

ded becomes washed or worn away. We pity that other crown with which, in its downward progress, it may come in contact. That such loosenings do in fact take place, is evident from the mass of debris at the base, between which and a small road or footpath, a strong dyke, composed of the collected joints, has been raised, probably to prevent the obstruction of the pathway, and the destruction of the passing traveller. On the face of a hill in the same bay there is a central space, called the *organ*, on account of the resemblance which a portion of its columns bears to the pipes of that instrument. They increase in length upwards from sides to centre, and thus look also like a hugely fluted gothic doorway, which, if opened, would lead one into the centre of the mountain. During our brief sojourn in what was in itself a very solemn and awe-inspiring scene, surrounded by a work of nature so far transcending, yet in its features so resembling the handicraft of man, our chief annoyance arose from some idle Irish boys and boatmen, who pestered us with explanations which we needed not, and poked little boxes of minerals under our noses, which they wished to sell, and we had no desire to purchase. Perhaps we

ought not to call them idle, for they were in truth industriously following at least an honest calling, and were on the whole as usefully employed for their families as certain people whom we need not name. But yet, when we looked down upon the heaving world of waters infinite, and saw the darkening rocks, and the columnar shore, and a fiery though almost beamless sun sinking into, and indeed at that moment half buried beneath the waveless sea, we would have desired a few moment's meditation in utter solitude, to receive the deep delight of that majestic scene. As it was, we could only contrive occasionally to cast off our pursuers by pointing with a considerate finger to our friends below, naming them as much richer and far fonder of natural curiosities than ourself, and so on "a hill apart," we contrived to indulge in solitary musing on all the dread magnificence by which we were surrounded.

It was towards ten in the evening before we were ready to re-embark on board the cutter. When stepping into our boat from the causeway, which forms of itself a most convenient landing-place, with natural gradations among the columns, better than any artificial stepping-stones, the scene

of clamour and confusion among "the finest pisantry in the world," was most amusing. We now indulged them by buying a few of their trumpery boxes, and just as we were pushing off, and were perhaps a yard or so beyond the reach of their outstretching arms, one wild looking fellow, with worser tangles than "Neæra's hair," held out the fragment of an ancient stone hatchet. "Throw it into the boat," shouted one of our men. "Och!" cried the son of Erin, "and what will ye be after throwin' me in return." The Secretary was delighted alike with the ready reply, and the humorous aspect and expression of the Paddy in question, the sailor at the bow instinctively caught the head of a column for a moment with his boat-hook, and we again neared the ledge so as to exchange the desired sum for the Irish hatchet. When we asked the native where he had got it, he replied, "out of the ploughed ground, your honour, where it was found *quite natural*;" and surely in a country where nature produces magnificent flights of steps and stairs along shore, and cathedral doors and organs among the loftier cliffs, it is scarcely to be wondered at that she should obtain the addi-

tional credit of occasionally hatching implements of war.

From a boat which came alongside the cutter, we laid in a small supply of fish, consisting of sethe, a few flounders, one mackerel, a sea-perch, and some crabs. With a selection of these we were regaled at supper, though it was with difficulty we could prevail upon ourselves to leave the deck,—for scarcely had the wondrous sight we had just witnessed been dimmed by distance in the pearly summer twilight, than behold the other "glory of the heavens" appeared in a soft uprising moon. We had, however, a fine tripping run to Islay, and a few hours after we had retired to rest, cast anchor off Bowmore.

We here passed two very agreeable days at Islay House. The prevailing aspect of the country, as viewed from the sea, is rather bare and barren, and those parts where the chief amenities prevail being somewhat low and flat, the plantations are seen as it were greatly fore-shortened, and so diminished in effect. But as we approached the dwelling-house we found a great extent of richly wooded walks, with far-spreading rosaries, and other intermingled garden grounds, and an exten-

sive semicircular lawn, screened by a sheltering belt of shrubbery from the " injurious sea." It would take long to tell of all the wonders of art and nature which are here combined. Neither need we dwell on those elegancies of civilized life which, always grateful to the feelings, showed to additional advantage when we thought of the wild barbarians we had lately seen along the pillared shores of the Emerald Isle.

Besides its arboreal beauties, the vicinity of Islay House is remarkable for its tasteful and extensive aviaries, its various ponds for aquatic fowl, its plots of intermingled grass and gravel, where strut in all their pride of place an assortment of most beautiful bantams, to say nothing of more secluded inclosures devoted to the rearing of the different species of pheasants and other game. There are also a pair of very lively otters, which will take a fish from any one's hand, and will also gladly bite that same, when they find nothing between the finger and thumb. Islay's own dwelling place is large and irregular, not distinguished by any architectural beauty, but possessing a pleasant patriarchal character from its numerous offsets and dependencies, and presenting indeed almost a village aspect,

when its various tops and chimneys are seen among the tufted trees.

We understand that almost all the outer adornments are owing to the exertions of the present hospitable proprietor. Few trees were planted by his predecessors, and even so late as fifteen years ago this quarter of the island did not greatly differ from the surrounding hills, which if not barren in the pastoral sense of the word, are at least treeless and unadorned. There are now, however, about 1300 acres of young plantations in the most thriving state. Indeed the growth of trees of all kinds here within these last few years has been quite remarkable. After exploring the wooded wilderness of pleasure grounds by which the dwelling is surrounded, and inspecting the ponds, aviaries, and other zoological enclosures, we made an excursion upwards along the river side, through a beautifully wooded avenue, or private road, of several miles in length, by which the house is approached from the north-eastwards. The soil which stretches along the stream is a deep mossy loam, now made dry by draining, and any natural monotony of character which its original tendency to flatness may have imposed upon it, is relieved by

the varied verdure of the plantations, interspersed with cultivated glades and sunny meadows. The proprietor retains some thousand acres in his own hands, and gives employment to a very numerous body of attached retainers. We ourselves felt very anxious to retain a few of the finny inhabitants of the glittering waters, of which the delightful murmur had long been music to our ears, and which we could discern at intervals stretching in fine alternate streams and pools between the umbrageous banks. It was a mild sweet morning in the "leafy month of June" (the 28th), and as the river bears a good character both for trout and salmon, we were not without the hope of sport. The supply of water, however, had been for some time before extremely small, it had rained in torrents during the preceding night both over hill and dale, and the immediate result was that opaque or muddy flow so unpropitious to the angler's art. If there were fish in the river they were occupied with their own concerns, and declined to come ashore, for all we got was a few small trout. But we greatly enjoyed our ramble, rod in hand, along these sylvan banks, to which each successive year will add increase of beauty.

Indeed, the river side already exhibits for a long way upwards from its mouth, rather the features of an English landscape than such as usually characterise the Western Isles.

The game on Islay is abundant. Besides roe, and occasional red-deer which come across from Jura, fallow-deer exist almost in a state of nature. Rabbits are numerous, and hares are said to be of two kinds,—one of them probably identical with *Lepus Hibernicus*. Vermin (with the exception of rats) are not particularly troublesome, and neither foxes, badgers, nor wild cats, exist upon the island, though otters are of course well known. Feathered game is likewise plentiful,—pheasants, partridges, grouse, black game, and, in their season wood-cocks in great abundance. Mr. Campbell has brought in thirty-nine of the latter to his own gun in one day, although he has in vain attempted to achieve the twenty brace. The mineral products are also rich and varied. Lime abounds, and symptoms of tin occur in boulders. Copper, iron, and lead are well known, and different ornamental articles have been manufactured from the silver obtained from the latter ore.

Islay may indeed be regarded as the richest and

most productive island of the Hebrides; and notwithstanding all that has been done for it in recent years, its capabilities of improvement are still very far from being exhausted. We believe that the moral and industrial habits of the people are also much ameliorated since the erection of legalized distilleries, and the consequent cessation of the illicit trade in whisky. Whatever may be the general effect of ardent spirits (and they are often sufficiently obvious), there can be no doubt that payment of duties, amounting to a yearly revenue of upwards of £30,000 to Government, must be useful in its way. The island is about 25 miles long, and 22 in utmost breadth, but the great *bight* of Loch-in-daal divides the south-western extremity into two large peninsular portions, so that there is no continuous breadth of land equal to that just named.

There are many interesting recollections connected with such of the ancient ruins as remain to attest, however dimly, its early history. It was long a favoured residence of the Lords of the Isles. The fierce inroads of the Scandinavian Vikinger resulted in the reduction of the Hebrides by Harold Harfäger of Denmark in the 9th cen-

tury, and early in the 12th, Somerled, Thane of Argyll and Lord of Innisgal (isles of the Gael), married Effrica, daughter of Olaus, Viceroy if not King of Man, a descendant of Harold. Somerled exercised authority independent of the crown of Scotland, with which indeed he carried on frequent wars, in one of which, in the time of Malcolm IV., he was defeated and slain near Renfrew. Two ancient Scottish families, or rather dynasties, draw their descent from Somerled, each of great renown during our middle ages,—the Lords of the Isles from his second son, Reginald, and the Lords of Lorn from his eldest son, Dugal. It was Angus Og, the fourth in descent from Somerled, who entertained the heroic Bruce in his Castle of Dunaverty, near the Mull of Cantyre; and John, the son of Og, called by Dean Munro, "the good John of Isla," was perhaps the most powerful of all the Highland chieftains. In addition to his matrimonial inheritance, he obtained great grants from David II., Baliol, and Robert II., so as to have at last acquired either the princely sway or the actual possession of nearly the entire western coasts and islands. This "good John," honest man, had two families, the first of whom is sup-

posed by some to have been illegitimate. At all events, after his death (which took place in 1380, at Ardtornish Castle, from whence his embalmed body was carried for sepulture to Icolmkill), his son Ranald, who had been chief ruler of the Isles even in his father's lifetime, delivered the sceptre to his younger brother Donald (not uterine, but son of Margaret Stewart, daughter to Robert Stewart King of Scotland), who was thereupon called Macdonald, and Lord of the Isles. From him is undoubtedly descended the family of Sleat, now Lords Macdonald. Sir Walter Scott leant to the opinion that Ranald, son of "John of Isla," by Ann of Lorn, was legitimate, and, therefore, *de jure* Lord of the Isles, although *de facto* his half-brother Donald, son of a Scottish princess, superseded him, apparently by his own consent. Finally, from Ranald (not he who was murdered one fine day in 1346, by the Earl of Ross), descended two most potent chieftains, Glengarry and Clanranald. Now the great historical question mooted, not without acrimony even in our own days, is this, —whether *un certo* Donald (*secundus*), the supposed ancestor of Glengarry, or one Allan of Moidart, from whom the Captains of Clanranald claim de-

scent, was the eldest son of Ranald aforesaid.* Of the actual truth in this matter we are ourselves as ignorant as the child unborn; and if we did possess a knowledge of it we would hold our peace (especially in the Highlands), even although we also knew that the representative of the one had carried both himself and his tail to New South Wales, while that of the other (somewhat like Tam o' Shanter's mare), had "fient a tail to shake."

In subsequent times, the power of these island princes was broken, if not subdued. John d'Ile (also Earl of Ross), who in 1455 had laid waste the islands in the Clyde, entered into a treaty with Edward IV. of England (1462), and having surprised the Castle of Inverness, made himself to be proclaimed King of the Hebrides. For these, and other misdeeds, he was attainted, although afterwards recognised as a Lord of Parliament, under the title of Lord of the Isles. Refusing, however, to submit in proper form to James IV., who in 1494 made more than one personal progress to the Western Isles, he

* The late Glengarry also maintained the illegitimacy of one of his opponent's ancestors, a descendant of Allan of Moydart.

was again attainted with more stringent consequences, his entire possessions being forfeited to the crown. The title of Lord of the Isles was subsequently refused to be restored by James V., when claimed on the part of a certain Donald, an illegitimate grandson of the last named John.

But even a hundred years afterwards, or towards the close of the 16th century, most fierce and bloody feuds prevailed between the Macdonalds of Islay and the Macleans of Mull; and it was about this period that the ancient inheritance of the former, both in Islay and Cantyre, was gifted to the Campbells and the Earl of Argyll. Between these latter and the earlier inhabitants, desperate struggles continued till about the year 1616, when the Macdonalds being finally vanquished, their power in Islay passed away, and the Campbells have ever since held the chief sway there and throughout Argyll.—*Esto perpetua.* Under the protection of the present peaceful ruler of the island, we passed the *Gallow-hill*, where summary justice (if not revenge) had so often been executed in the iron-times above referred to, and where now remain the only emblems of "loud throated war," in a few huge 24-pounders, which, however, command no

more contentious rufflings, than may occasionally arise in the *basse-cours* below, when strong-spurred jealous bantams with sideling wing, seek each to exercise unchecked seignorial rights, and undisputed sway.

We sailed from Loch-in-daal before daylight in the morning of the 29th, and slipped outwards with a light air and all our canvass spread. The sky was clear, yet gorgeous, even throughout the night, and a whale kept playing around the vessel for some time, as if to add to the interest of the scene. We did not, however, understand that it was one of Islay's own, although we had so recently witnessed the effect of kindness and attention in subduing the natural fearfulness of so many inhabitants of the woods and wilds. We unwillingly left the deck to retire to rest, about four in the morning.

Re-appearing again in reasonable time, we found the cutter had rounded the Mull of O'e, the most southern portion of Islay, and was entering what is called the Loudans. Our course now lay northwards, with the island of Gigha to the right, and Cantyre in the further distance. Coasting along the Islay shore, we passed Port-Ellen on the left,

and could discern some air-darkening distilleries, of which we believe there are now above a dozen in the Island ;—that called Lossit (till recently under the skilful management of Mr. Malcolm M'Neill) being justly regarded as remarkable for the peculiar excellence of its whisky. The coast here is not remarkably bold, but rises with considerable variety of undulation backed by hills, and a great extent is covered by copse-wood of oak, hazle, &c. When we were off Ardmore point the wind came right a-head, and increased in strength, so that we had to beat towards the Sound of Islay. There is some bold scenery at the entrance of the Sound, especially on the left side, where the Islay land becomes mountainous, and rises with bare almost precipitous sides from the very sea, receding here and there into semicircular glens, surrounded by rocky faces. The Jura side ascends more slopingly, and although of bleakish aspect from the want of trees, exhibits signs of rather extensive cultivation, while some picturesque rocks are seen to rise along the margin of the sea. The mansion house of Jura has a commonplace appearance from a distance, which in this case fails to lend enchantment to the view, and the entire absence of trees divests at

least its outer aspect of that combination of comfort and supremacy which usually characterizes the principal dwelling of a district. Further on is the Freuch, or heather island, bearing some stony remnants resembling the foundation of an ancient peel tower. These are the ruins of Cluig Castle, an ancient stronghold of the Macdonalds. It is still surrounded by a deep ditch, and served at one period both as a prison, and a protection to the passage of the Sound.

The tides are known to run through the Sound of Islay with the strength and rapidity of an enormous river, and an ordinary sailing vessel can no more make way against them, than an antelope can withdraw its slender limbs from the crushing coils of a boa-constrictor. A steamer alone can oppose that rushing current with any chance of success. We beat across and across again, and then, as if

"Dragging at each remove a lengthening chain,"

we found ourselves nearly where we were :—so we went below to dinner, while the cutter kept off and on as she best could, till the tide should turn. The Maid of Islay steamer passed us ere long, with the accustomed successful pertinacity of these paddlers,

but our Princess Royal made a great start the moment the flow was with us, and we were speedily abreast of Portaskaig. There are few places of more picturesque appearance than this little station, with its quay and fishing boats, a few small houses assembled near a rocky creek, and a finely wooded glen retiring backwards towards the "hill country." We merely landed with our letters, and also gave notice to the country people, that we would willingly afford a passage to any one bound like ourselves to Colonsay. A poor woman and a sick child (mother and daughter), who had been as far as Greenock to consult the doctors, were all who needed to avail themselves of our proposed kindness, so we pursued our way northwards with a head wind. However, the tide was still with us, and we speedily cleared the remaining portion of the Sound, of which the northern opening also presents several fine features. Indeed the entire passage is extremely striking from the narrow nature of the sea-way, the rapid flowing of the vast briny river, and the high surrounding hills on either side,—wild barren mountains in their general aspect, with seldom either a tree, or any vestige even of human habitation, though yielding good

pasture for sheep and other bestial, and affording excellent cover (especially Jura) for grouse, black-game, and deer.

Like many other isles and promontories of Scotland, Jura is deeply intersected near its central portion by a narrow arm or inlet of the sea, called Loch Tarbert, which almost cuts it into two. We had no occasion to enter it at this time. The southern and larger portion of the island belongs to Mr. Campbell (called of Jura), the narrower and more northern is the property of the M'Neills of Colonsay. At Ardlussa, on the eastern side of this smaller division, there is an excellent stream, especially for sea-trout (*Salmo trutta*), and where good grilse may also be frequently hoped for, and occasionally obtained. The private accommodation afforded us there in earlier life we thought excellent, but we understand the domestic arrangements have been recently enlarged and improved by Mr. Duncan M'Neill, the distinguished lawyer, her Majesty's present Solicitor-General for Scotland and the Western Isles.*

* These Isles are usually regarded as actually belonging to, and forming parts, or at least pendicles, of the mainland king-

The shades of night were closing over us by the time we neared the long unvisited but not forgotten shores of Colonsay; and as our pilot, though very skilful, and sufficiently acquainted with all these rock-bound coasts, was uncertain amid the increasing darkness, of the precise spot of anchorage most suitable for the vessel's safety and our convenience, we hung off and on till daylight, and then cast anchor close upon the harbour of Scalasaig. But by this time we had all been long in the arms of Morpheus.

The earlier part of the ensuing day (the 30th June), was fair though sombre,—the panoramic view around extremely fine;—there lay the verdant Islay to the south, and Jura, with her triple crown, the rounded but lofty Scarba, guarding the great whirlpool of the Corryvrekan, which raises to the west a ceaseless surge (deep answereth unto deep at the sound of her water-spouts), and north-

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dom; but we have felt less assured of this fact in the geography of our country ever since we heard a well known lawyer, and highly instructed gentleman, request to know, when green peas were presented at dinner in Jura, "Whether these grew in the island, or had been imported from Scotland?"

wards the great mountains of the Ross of Mull, with, close beneath our lee, the lowlier shores of "lonely Colonsay."

> "Scenes sung by him who sings no more!
> His bright and brief career is o'er,
> And mute his tuneful strains;
> Quench'd is his lamp of varied lore,
> That loved the light of song to pour;
> A distant and a deadly shore
> Has LEYDEN'S cold remains!"

Alas! that the mightier Minstrel should himself have followed him whom he deplores!

We now landed at the small harbour of Scalasaig, which is formed in a creek by a single pier and head. The first object which met our view was of a somewhat disconsolate character,—the hull of a merchant-vessel of 250 tons lying at this time dry upon the beach. She was found several years ago by some Colonsay fishermen at sea, deserted by her crew, with the exception of one poor fellow who was lying dead among the shrouds. Either the owners or underwriters have asserted some claim to the hull, which is now a wreck of a forbidding and rather ominous aspect, and this, we presume, prevents her being broken

up, although her present position is both ugly and inconvenient. Proceeding onwards towards Killouran (the family dwelling-house, distant nearly three miles from the quay), we passed the Church, a small building of plain and simple aspect, but seated, if we remember rightly, at least in part, with cedar wood, probably a *waif* from some unhappy wreck. The inland road winds upwards by a Druidical pillar, or other ancient memorial, among craggy knolls; and ere long from the higher portion of a narrow rock-bound pass, we could command a view backwards of a considerable extent of cultivated land. We had not proceeded far before we met one of the natives on horseback with a letter from the Laird to bid us welcome, and soon after a horse and cart were encountered on their way to the cutter, to convey our baggage to the house. This last order, however, we used the liberty to countermand, as it was our intention merely to pass the evening at Killouran, and return on board the Princess Royal for the night, with a view to weighing anchor at an early hour.

After clearing the rocky pass, we wound down towards the central portion of the island, which may be described in a general way as a lengthened

circular hollow, well cultivated in its lower parts, but surrounded by barren though sheltering hills. The weather unfortunately now became more moist and dull, but although we know not the number of long years of mingled joy and sorrow which may have passed away since our last visit, we had no difficulty in recognising, in spite of mist and vapour, many an old familiar scene. It often happens that a few repeated persevering looks at what were once familiar places, have much the same effect as clearing away the moss and lichens which encrust an ancient tomb-stone, or rubbing the rust from off some old time-honoured coin. All that was dim, or even dead, in our remembrance, gains gradually increase of strength, till at last the sad waters of oblivion roll slowly backwards, and sunny scenes of youth or early manhood are brought to view in all their original brightness. So is it also with the well-remembered aspect of a much-loved, long lost friend,—some one in whom a score of years (and no furlough) beneath a burning clime, has changed the fair fresh hue of youth to that of the Nabob's hoarded gold, and has grizzled redundant locks once glossy as the raven's wing. The gay and limber youth, as wild with

glee as any mountain fawn, can scarcely at first be recognised in the stayed features and somewhat sombre bearing of the highly respectable middle-aged gentleman (retired upon a good allowance, and not without thought of the East India direction), who unexpectedly presents himself before you, under an old familiar name. And yet before the first cheerful evening you spend together has half elapsed, the voice, the eye, the manner, mode of speech, the very hair (even though it should afterwards prove a wig), return upon you as those of the self-same friend who gladdened the glory of your morning life with unalloyed affection, and before you part he not only seems in every thing to be exactly as he was of old, but has also become one of the youngest men, except yourself, you ever met with. May the "Laus Deo" be here as luminous as it once was to the wonder-stricken gaze of the enquiring philosopher. But what we mean to say is simply this, that not having been in Colonsay for more than twenty years, our reminiscences of many things were at first in some respects opaque and feeble, but increased in strength and clearness as we proceeded on our way rejoicing.

The surface of the lateral portions of the cultivated vale is varied by gentle undulations, and we soon approached the margin of a large and lengthened fresh-water lake, which (the after-experience of the dinner-hour convinced us) contains excellent red-fleshed trout. Leaving this lake to the left, we wound our way, skirted by some thriving plantations (where we met Captain M'Neill, younger of Colonsay, who had come out to meet us), and descending into a grove of wood, and crossing a tiny streamlet, the smoking chimneys of Killouran (pleasanter sight, be sure, than the old black stranded hull upon the beach), now became visible among some ancient trees on the opposing bank. Debouching from the wood, we opened upon a smooth expansive plain of cultivated meadow, and following the curve of the approach, took the dwelling-house in front, over a *terre-pleine* of artificially-levelled lawn. We were welcomed at the porch by the venerable old Laird himself,—" Sole King of rocky Colonsay," and his hospitable Lady.

Killouran is a comfortable, unambitious mansion, with a compact body, and capacious wings. It has been increased since our last visit by addi-

tions to the public rooms, both in respect to size and number. From an inward portion of a lengthened but well-lighted lobby, a glass door gives egress to a long, broad, grassy terrace-walk, running parallel with the back of the house, and between it and a sloping bank which descends towards the wooded glen through which the streamlet flows. This terrace leads onwards to a large modernly-constructed walled garden, and is itself richly ornamented by groups of Laurustinus and Arbutus, and especially by some gigantic Hydrangeas, which the comparatively mild winters of a sea-girt isle enable to ripen their wood, and so flourish and increase from year to year;—whereas, in the mainland districts, except in very sheltered or peculiar situations, each summer season has enough to do in repairing the damage done by the frost of the preceding winter, or it may be, spring. The position of these garden grounds and shrubbery is really beautiful, and even the craggy and more distant hills seem to lose their general character of barrenness, or at least have that character softened, if not subdued, when seen through openings in the "leafy um-

brage" by which this southern portion of the scenery is invested.

It may perhaps surprise a stranger to be informed of one feature of the residence of a Highland gentleman, inhabiting a comparatively low and narrow island of the Hebrides,—there is no view whatever of the ocean waters, either from the mansion-house or its immediate vicinity, although to the north-west may be perceived a wide opening in the neighbouring hills, exhibiting in the remoter distance a bold, rugged, and picturesque promontory, on which the great Atlantic often breaks in many a fearful surge. Some lovers of Nature in her wild magnificence, your moody-minded men who seek

"The lightning, the fierce winds, the trampling waves,"

as wrathful elements, which rather delight than daunt their spirits, may lament this apparent absence of the briny deep. But it cannot be doubted, that for the encouragement of many a home delight the inland vale possesses great advantage, with its quiet pastures and protecting hills, its full-topped trees, and shrubs adorned with leafy

cincture, instead of that scaithed one-sided view of foliage, which so frequently results from free exposure to the open sea. It is alleged of an ancient predecessor who selected the site and built the habitation, that he was in use to say,—he had no desire to see from his windows the face of the enemy by whom he was imprisoned.

The present Laird, like other shore proprietors, was an extensive kelp manufacturer in former times, and realised a large annual income from that source prior to the reduction of duty on salt and barilla. Indeed, he still continues to cut and burn the sea-ware as a source of profitable occupation for the people, and means to do so as long as the manufacture is not attended by absolute loss.* The introduction of the Spanish article has proved a most serious disadvantage to the Scottish coasts and isles, although counteracted, it may be, in the present case by great success in

* It is truthfully observed in a recent publication, that "owing to the exertions and liberal policy of the proprietor, the inhabitants (of Colonsay) are in a much more comfortable condition than those of most of the other Hebridian Isles."—CHAMBERS' *Picture of Scotland*, p. 534.

rearing cattle. To many others, however, of less skilful capacity and fewer resources, it must have proved little less than ruin.*

Mr. M'Neill of Colonsay, and his brother Mr. Malcolm (of Lossit), are indeed well known all over the adjoining island (we mean Great Britain), as among the most successful improvers of the stock of cattle of the West Highland breed. We prevailed upon the Laird not to expose himself on our account to the inclement weather; but the Secretary, in spite of rain which was now falling fast and furious, sallied forth to an enclosed spot at some distance from the house, to inspect a portion of the breeding stock. They were long-horned, and extremely handsome, and one yellow or dun bull was much admired.

Our entertainment at dinner was as ample as it

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* We have somewhere seen it noted, that this result (less disadvantageous than it seemed) was not so greatly to be regretted, as the weed from which the kelp was made, was "manure intended by Nature for the land." Its manufacture, therefore, though it yielded a revenue to the landlord, was supposed to retard agriculture, and thereby curtail the quantity of produce which the soil would otherwise have yielded for the more comfortable maintenance of the Highland population.

was excellent, and the Highland mutton, "kept to a minute, roasted to a turn," was such as could not be rivalled in the low countries, where, so far as respects the age of sheep, twice two never makes four, and people fail to see that killing a couple of pair of Caithness cheviots, each in its second year, is a most unsuccessful mode of presenting their friends with black-faced four-year-olds. It seems to be argued, that each cheviot having lived at least a year, if there are four of them, the age of the aggregate becomes almost venerable, but the mutton in its pallid poorness answers "No." Therefore, we think, the Colonsay plan preferable, of letting each particular sheep attain a good old age, and so thought unanimously the whole party on the present occasion. Meanwhile the stalwart piper upheaved himself and all around, "with windy suspiration of forced breath," and almost blew the meat out of our mouths, so potent was his might. The evening was wound up in gallant style by a Highland fling danced to perfection by Sir T. D. L. and the Lady of Colonsay, C. C. H. and Captain M'Neill,—and such snapping of fingers and pointing of toes, and ever and anon a shout like a musket shot, were never seen or heard

before in any western isle. Though the old Laird himself is certainly not what he was when, more than twenty years ago, we travelled with him on foot o'er moor and mountain, and had enough to do to keep our own, it yet rejoiced our hearts to see him once again,—and *his* heart seemed still in its old place, and beating strong and true, whatever feebleness may have otherwise encroached upon his formerly robust, almost gigantic frame.

All pleasant passages in human life conclude at last. We heard the rattling of the blast without as it rushed from tree to chimney, to show its impartial character, or howled past doors and windows, like a hungry wolf seeking what it might devour. Withstanding all entreaties to remain for the night beneath the shelter of that kindly roof, we concluded with a small deoch-an-doruis from an ancient quaich, and bidding farewell to our hospitable friends, we buckled on our pea-jackets, drew our south-westers over our brows, tried to look grim and bold, and then sallied forth, having the same three miles or thereby to take us to the Cutter as had brought us hither, with little chance of their proving much shorter in darkness than in daylight. The rain drove against us all

the way like split peas, and the aforesaid road (now by courtesy so called), which was well enough in the morning in its own wild way, had by this time been converted in many places to something like a muddy river. Our own clay assuredly was moist enough before we got on board, but it is a sustaining thought to know that one is serving their Queen and country, and we ourself never cared much for rain-water at any time; so, after looking a little at the cabin fire (which was bright and beautiful), and also at a red herring and a glass of ale, merely to encourage commerce, we retired to our respective places of repose.

The Princess Royal was again under weigh by six in the morning of the 1st of July, with every promise of a brilliant day. We took our course southwards, in the direction of the almost adjoining island of Oronsay, where we desired to visit the ruins of the ancient monastery, and the family of Captain M'Neill. Passing the almost imperceptible strait which at high water separates these sister isles, we landed on the lower and more sandy shore of Oronsay, which is smooth and flat throughout its southern parts, but abrupt and rocky in its northern quarter. The sea, as we landed, was

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as calm and clear as glass, and we saw one of the great seals of Scotland (not that kept by His Grace of Argyll, which we trust is fixed), tumble himself from a rocky ledge into its liquid depths. Walking across some grassy downs, and then through large and cultivated fields, we came to the residence of Captain M'Neill, placed close upon the ruins. It must be a healthy residence, if one may judge from the aspect of his fine young family, so fresh, ruddy, and redolent of the sea-borne breezes.

Although there is neither beauty nor grandeur in the ruins of the Monastery, they are interest-

ing from their lonely site and remote antiquity; and there is one solitary stone cross of great height and exquisite workmanship. These, and other remarkable remnants of ancient days, are all within a few yards of the dwelling-house, with which, indeed, they may be said to form a single group. They also, however, unfortunately combine with some neighbouring cottages, and being unenclosed and open to all intruders, they now exist in a much less sanctified condition than of old. The consequence is a rank unseemly growth of docks and nettles, which hide the fair though stony semblance of holy martyrs and renowned knights,

> "return'd to lie,
> The vow perform'd, in cross-legg'd effigy
> Devoutly stretch'd upon the chancel floor."

Now, were these ruins enclosed by a slight extension of the wall, within the garden grounds of the private dwelling, and surrounded, as they soon might be, by shrubs and creeping plants, the whole would form a place of pleasaunce of a most peculiar kind, where such a feature would assuredly be most desirable. But for want of this precaution, a solemn and picturesque group of ancient

buildings, among the most ancient either actually or by continuous representation, we believe, in the kingdom, which a little careful clearing out, and tasteful planting, would convert into a piece of home scenery of the highest interest, and probably elsewhere unexampled, necessarily goes to waste from year to year, the inscriptions and devices on its antique tombstones become obliterated, and overgrown with weeds, the sculptured glory of that holy cross itself profaned, and the very footpaths within and around in such a state, that man abhors, and "angels fear to tread." We doubt not that the *serfs* are to blame for the present condition of affairs, but they are every where, in all countries, too often regardless of the glories of antiquity, and should therefore either be encouraged by rewards to conduct themselves otherwise, or deterred by the most condign punishment from acting as they do.

The islands of Colonsay and Oronsay are named after St. Columba and his companion St. Oran. They constituted the first insular settlement of Columba within the territories of the Christian Scots, before he converted the heathen Picts, who afterwards assigned to him Iona. A Culdee esta-

blishment was founded at this time in Colonsay, called (after St. Oran) Killouran, the site being still indicated by the name of the existing mansion-house, already mentioned. Its remains were distinctly visible within the memory of the present generation, and a spring of most delicious water still rises near it, for the benefit of all teetotallers, the Secretary and ourself not included. The existing ruins at Oronsay are those of an abbey founded by the Lords of the Isles, subsequent to their connection with the Stewarts in the middle of the fourteenth century. It was one of canons regular, brought from Holyrood.

The prevailing families of the name MacNeill, in earlier times, were those of Barra and Gigha. The present representative of the Barra branch is Colonel Roderick MacNeill, and their possessions in the outer Hebrides, can be distinctly traced for upwards of four hundred years,—tradition carrying back to a much remoter period. The family of the MacNeills of Gigha, are known to have possessed that island more than four hundred years ago, although the direct line failed in the person of Neill MacNeill, towards the conclusion of Queen Mary's reign. The father of this individual, Neill of Gigha, and many gentlemen of the tribe,

were killed in a feud with Allan Maclean of Torlusk, prior to the year 1542. On extinction of the direct male line, Neill MacNeill Vic Eachan of Taynish became heir male of the family, and his descendant Hector purchased Gigha from the Macdonalds in the end of the reign of James VI., or early in that of Charles I. Hector's descendants retained possession both of Gigha and Taynish, till the reign of George III., in which they were sold. The family is, however, still represented in the male line by D. H. MacNeill of Raploch in Lanarkshire, while the ancient patrimony of Gigha has been purchased by Captain Alexander M'Neill, younger of Colonsay. From Malcolm Beg MacNeill, in the time of James VI., sprung the MacNeills of Arichonan, one of whom acquired from the Argyll family the island of Colonsay, which is now possessed by his descendant, the present laird, already gratefully commemorated.*

Mrs. A. M'Neill and family kindly accompanied us to our point of embarkation. We hoped to have amused the young people by taking them

* We here follow Mr. Donald Gregory, in his *History of the Western Highlands and Islands*, p. 423.

on board, but there was no native boat at hand, and driving them ashore again in the Captain's gig would have consumed too much time, as the Princess Royal lay off and on at some distance from the landing place. Before embarking we tried a couple of hauls with our sweep-net for grilse or sea-trout, in one of the beautiful sandy bays, but were unsuccessful, catching only a few crabs and some small flounders. There was something, however, very enlivening in our brief descent upon Oronsay:—the sky above being of crystalline depth and clearness, the stainless sea around sparkling in its far unbounded brightness, or murmuring as it rippled in lengthened slender semicircular wreaths, as white as snow, along the glittering sands.

We now turned our prow again northwards, recoasting the eastern shores of Colonsay, and doubling Point Prua, its northern termination. The coast is generally rocky, though not bold on this eastern side, but rather dipping into the water in the form of sloping stony ledges. On the northwest, however, it seemed to assume a bolder and more picturesque character, and we could again distinguish the bluff headland, formerly seen through the opening valley from Killouran, as well as many high precipitous cliffs, which we know,

from the experience of youthful days, to be perforated by some fine caverns. The lengthened shadows of evening were now stretching themselves across the bays, and the yellow sands were darkened by the huge interceptions cast upon them from their rock-bound barriers. Though the wind was slight, a dull broad swell was coming in from the great seaward opening, unbounded but by the western world, and so we sought the comforts of the cabin, while—

> All night the dreadless Cutter onwards bore,
> With surging prow, towards the Skerry-vore.

We were on deck by four in the morning of the 2d July, to take a look "by distance made more sweet," of this dangerous and much-dreaded rocky shelf, which lies about twelve miles out in the Atlantic, south-westwards of the Island of Tiree. Many a fair vessel and gallant crew have been lost upon its insidious and scarce seen ledges; but this death in darkness is now being converted, under the superintendence of Mr. Alan Stevenson, to a saving light, which will ere long cheer the heart of the belated or uncertain mariner, as he approaches these dangerous outworks of the Western Isles, and guide him towards some assured haven. We got a good

view through our glasses of its low abhorred front, now crowned by a great uprising column of enduring granite; but although it was a beautiful morning, both calm and clear, there was yet a low broad heaving swell from the Atlantic, and the surge itself warned us not to land. We were all entire strangers to the locality, and John Hill, our trust-worthy pilot, seeming very desirous to give the redoubtable Skerry-vore as wide a berth as was compatible with our indulging in a general view of its position and improvement, we speedily bore away for Tiree.*

* The foregoing wood-cut is from a drawing (with which we have been kindly favoured by Mr. Alan Stevenson, the resident engineer), of the building as it will appear after its completion, which will probably be effected in the course of the present summer.

This last-named island is extremely low and flat throughout the greater portion of its extent, although there is some land a few hundred feet in height in its southern division. On gaining an open bay, we took boat, and passing behind a rocky promontory, landed on a pier composed very solidly of huge blocks of gneiss. Close in shore we came unexpectedly on various important buildings connected with the construction of the Skerry-vore light,—large substantial barracks, smiths' shops, extensive working sheds, and a handsome local light-house. We also found numerous East-country masons hard at work,—brawny, strong-limbed Aberdonians, to whose pick and chisel even the resistant granite yields by slow degrees. A resident surgeon had likewise been established here for behoof of the workmen. The granite blocks are quarried in Mull, and wrought in Tiree. In fact a kind of rehearsal (and the island affords plenty of green-room) of the building takes place here, each course of stones being finished off and numbered, and then carried by lighters and a steam-tug to the rock, where they are speedily fitted in to their respective dove-tailed places. From the immense size, peculiar

form, and original structure of these granitic masses, we should suppose the light-house must prove as enduring as if it were a work of Nature, and will probably last as long as the Skerry on which it stands.

Ascending the higher ground a little farther inland, we enjoyed a commanding view of the greater portion of the island. It was now a magnificent summer day, the sea around as calm as glass, but with a bright upheaving kind of swell, each single undulation being low but broad. The soil seemed good, but the arable fields we crossed required draining. Tiree, though light and sandy, is comparatively fertile, the surface being composed of calcareous or shell sand, with a mixture of vegetable earth, and there is an abundant supply of atmospheric moisture. A low and level plain lay stretched beneath us, northwards, of great extent, and raised but little above the level of the sea. It seemed entirely cultivated, and was covered by innumerable huts, of lowly structure,—probably a wise precaution in such an open, unprotected plain, so liable to be swept over by violent and otherwise unimpeded storms. A few

larger, and more commodious-looking dwellings were visible in the distance, and one of these, not far from a small fresh water lake, is the occasional residence of the Duke of Argyll, the proprietor of the island. The cattle sprinkled over the pasture fields were very numerous, sheep apparently not so abundant, though pigs were plentiful, and poultry in profusion. There are no trees, and what is far worse, scarcely any peats, so that the poorer classes are very ill off for fuel, and all concerned are obliged to proceed at different seasons to Mull, first to cut and prepare their fuel for drying, and afterwards to bring it home in their boats. It has been well observed in relation to Tiree, that although the deficiency of protecting enclosures, and the absence of those natural inequalities which elsewhere yield shelter to the products of the earth, might be presumed of disadvantage over a soil so loose and sandy, yet it is the very want of these features which constitutes a chief cause of its fertility. "In consequence of the level and unobstructed surface of the land, the sand is distributed over the flat parts in so equable a manner, as not only to raise it beyond

the power of the sea, but to improve the whole by perpetually renewing its natural calcareous manure, and seldom accumulating in such a manner as to repel or suffocate vegetation. The reverse effect is very apparent at its northern extremity, as it also is in Coll, where the rocky eminences, scattered over the surface, by affording shelter, cause the sand to collect in such a way as to produce a barren desert." * The people here raise a quantity of *bear*, which they export,—their import of a corresponding nature being meal. From the elevation where we stood, we could also command a view of the position of the marble quarries of Tiree, the produce of which, we believe, is not now greatly sought for in the south.

This island was in former times a patrimony of the Church, its name (Tir-I) signifying the land belonging to Iona. Its more ancient, if not euphonious appellation of *Rioghachd bur fo thuin*, bore reference to its extreme flatness, and was meant to express, as we are told,—" The kingdom whose summits are lower than the waves." It was re-

* CHAMBERS' *Gazeteer*, p. 986.

markable, even in recent times, for its great and unnecessary amount of horses, though these are now reduced. In the spring of 1792, there were in Tiree "2416 *souls*," and these, the majority of them we doubt not very poor souls, were possessed of not fewer than 1400 horses. There are no reptiles in the island, nor other quadrupedal vermin, such as weazels.

Taking again to our boat, we made towards the Cutter, but on our way outwards we hauled the long line which our men had set sometime before, the hooks being baited with pieces of cod-fish, by no means an exciting or usually successful lure. We got some excellent skate, however, and numerous gurnards, and in the course of the day, while lying nearly becalmed, we caught a good many cod with the hand lines, but not in prime condition, these fish being large headed, with flat flabby sides and lengthened tails, the flesh soft in texture and poor in taste.

The air had been so light all day as to be at times almost imperceptible, and we lay nearly motionless, with dubious sails reflected on the bosom of the waveless deep. But it ere long freshened slightly, so as to take us towards a portion of the

shores of Coll, composed apparently of a rather unproductive alternation of rock and sand. We then trended westwards, in the direction of Ulva, passing or viewing various lesser islands,—the Dutchman's Cap, Lunga, Fladda, Cairnbuilg, and others, commonly called the Treishnish Isles, and all lying in the great embayment of the western coast of Mull. The forms of some of these are rocky, irregular, and picturesque; and on the cliffs of Cairnbuilg we could dimly discern through the evening twilight something resembling the remnants of a ruined wall, with embrasures. Proceeding somewhat further onwards, we anchored for the night off the sheltering shore of Ulva, in what is called, we believe, Loch Tua, or the Sound of Gometra.

The morning of the 3d of July was both moist and misty, which we regretted all the more as the glories of Staffa were our quest. We got under weigh about nine o'clock. The land was high on either side, and on the Mull shore, our northern boundary, we had a view of Mrs. Maclean Clephane's residence, Torloisk, a capacious looking mansion, placed on a wide semicircular inclined plain, surrounded by a considerable extent of young

plantations, and backed by mountains. We ran out freely, with a fine breeze, towards Cairnbuilg, which we kept on our starboard-bow, but the wind being from the south, we had soon to beat our way to Staffa. In other respects, however, the weather had now become more promising, and, as we approached the "Ocean's Diadem," and had cleared the southern point of Gometra, the view towards Inch Kenneth and up Loch-na-Keal, with the bold headlands of Mull on either side, was magnificent. A boat had been seen making for Staffa from the Ulva coast, but although she was several miles to the windward of us when first perceived, we beat her hollow, and had landed from our own boat to the northward of Booshala, before she reached the shore. We ere long found that she contained the guides, or rather guardians, of the island, who required to visit Staffa that day, to attend the debarkation from an expected steam-boat, but had probably put off from their creek in Ulva some hours sooner than necessary, in the anticipation of our visit. These guides really poison, by their pertinacious attendance, the tourist's very life in many solemn places, and in one like Staffa, where there are such impressive features to be seen in

silent wonder, surely the less that's *said* the better.

The general aspect and effect of Staffa are not particularly striking when seen from a vessel at any considerable distance from its shore. It is rather a lumpish looking island, of no great height, irregularly oval in its form, about a mile and a half in circumference, and consisting of an undulating table land, supported by precipitous cliffs of various height, many of them exhibiting the columnar form in the highest perfection.

We had scarcely set foot on that most wondrous pillared shore, than the air again thickened around us, and the distant scenery of Mull and the Treishnish and other isles became obliterated, or were but dimly seen. Yet it may be that this very isolation of Staffa, adding to its wild loneliness, increased its grandeur of effect. A singular ravine almost bisects the island, and on making one's way through it till we reach the opposite shore, the view of the various bold basaltic headlands to the westward is extremely fine. Returning towards the landing-place, we then ascended to the sloping grassy covering of the island, which every where meets the very edge of the lofty cliffs,

the brows of which, composed chiefly of amorphous basalt, or rock irregularly crystallised in small prismatic forms, beetles over, and is at the same time supported by, the more gigantic and symetrical shafts beneath. We lay down from time to time upon this grassy ledge, peering over the giddy precipices, and enjoying the sight of the tumultuous waves, heaving and surging over the truncated crowns of the beautiful close-set columns which compose such a splendid causeway between the steeper portion and the sea. The dissonant cries of the water-fowl which winged their sullen flight above us, were intermingled with "the diapason of the deep," and it was indeed a wild yet solemn anthem which thus swelled the note of praise around the most magnificent of Nature's temples. The downward view from along the whole of this elevated range is very striking, both of the causewayed shore, and the singular rock called Booshala, or the Herdsman, separated by a narrow channel of only a few feet of most transparent water from the Staffa strand. This lesser isle is itself a perfect gem in respect to its beauty of basaltic structure, being composed entirely of the most symetrical columnar forms, several of them

bent in a peculiar manner, and the generality lying on their sides. Beyond this, the columns which support the tabular portion of the island gradually increase in grandeur, and on attaining the highest portion of the cliff, we find ourselves gazing from the summit of Fingal's Cave down upon the clear green waters, which rise and fall, with many a heaving swell, between the dark and congregated mass of shortened columns which protrude as it were from the jaws of that great cavern.

We then visited the more central summit of the island, passing by the side of a pretty large unroofed, and therefore desolate looking building, of modern structure. It was intended as a place of refuge and refreshment for visitors who might desire to prolong their stay, but the proprietor seems to have reckoned without his host, as the latter never made his appearance, and the traveller who now expects to find shelter here, must rest satisfied with his share of what Shakspeare calls, "the canopy of the kites and crows." The northern portion of the island bears the marks of agricultural ridges, and the grass is beautifully verdant.*

* The tenant, we believe, pays about £20 a year of rent for

There are some wild wave-worn bays along its broken shore, and the cliffs though not so regularly columnar, are loftier, and as precipitous as those we had already seen.

We now bent our steps towards a shelving spot, not far from our former landing-place, where we found the only safe descent towards the water's edge. The singular basaltic rock is seen at frequent intervals protruding in low but regular crowns of columns through the turf. On descending to the shore, we took our course southwards along the tesselated pavement so beautifully formed, as on the Giant's Causeway, by the innumerable heads of shorter pillars, which intervene between the great columnar cliffs and water's edge, and thus compose a broad, sloping, irregular, somewhat curved, but by no means inconvenient highway to the great cave. We first passed what is called the clam-shell cave, on one side of which the

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Staffa. Half-a-dozen small stots, and about the same number of sheep, seemed to constitute its total pastoral stock. When we were about to land, we perceived two large ravens, probably increased in their apparent size, by being seated as it were on the sky-line of the upper portion of the island, and we were afterwards informed that that felonious pair had not left alive a single lamb.

columns assume the form of a fine curve, presenting a fanciful resemblance to a vessel's ribs,—while the opposite face is formed of the projecting crowns of horizontal columns. From opposite the isle Booshala onwards, the great supporting pillars on the right-hand side become and continue quite erect, and present a most magnificent colonnade all along the vertical face of this portion of the island, till we gain the cathedral-like entrance into Fingal's Cave, before approaching which we turn westwards. A broad truncated column a foot or two in height, with another behind it somewhat higher and serving as a back, is known by the name of Fingal's chair,—and a sublime though rocky throne it really is for such a hero, in the midst of Nature's unmatched magnificence. A little beyond this the entrance opens of Uaimh Binn,—the *Musical*, or Fingal's Cave, one of Staffa's chiefest wonders.

A certain ingenious critic (the late Mr. Hazlitt, we believe), in describing the *delices* of Paris, alleged that the *Café des Mille Colonnes* was one of the most beautiful things *in nature*. How far that elegant establishment may be actually a piece of nature's handiwork it might be hard to say, but

here assuredly we have as many thousand columns as would support the entire Palais Royal. Fingal's Cave is indeed a most magnificent example of nature's architecture. A vast archway of nearly 70 feet in height, supporting a massive entablature of 30 feet additional, and receding for about 230 feet inwards,—the entire front, as well as the great cavernous sides, being composed of countless complicated ranges of gigantic columns, beautifully jointed, and of most symmetrical though somewhat varied forms,—the roof itself exhibiting a rich grouping of overhanging pillars, some of snowy whiteness from the calcareous covering by which they have become encrusted,—the whole rising from and often seen reflected by the ocean waters,—forms truly a picture of unrivalled grandeur, and one on which it is delightful to dwell even in remembrance. How often have we since recalled to mind the regularity, magnitude, and loftiness of those columns, the fine o'erhanging cliff of small prismatic basalt to which they give support, worn by the murmuring waves of many thousand years into the semblance of some stupendous Gothic arch,

"Where, thro' the long drawn aisle and fretted vault,"

the wild waters ever urge their way,—and the receding sides of that great temple, running inwards in solemn perspective, yet ever and anon, as ocean heaves and falls, rendered visible in its far sanctuary, by the broad and flashing light reflected by the foaming surges sweeping onwards from below! Then the broken and irregular gallery which overhangs that subterranean flood, and from which, looking upwards and around, we behold the rich and varied hues of red, green, and gold, which give such splendid relief to the deep and sombre-coloured columns,—the clear bright tints which sparkle beneath our feet, from the wavering yet translucent sea,—the whole accompanied by the wild yet mellow and sonorous moan of each successive billow, which rises up the sides, or rolls over the finely formed crowns of the lowlier and disjointed pillars:—these are a few of the features of this exquisite and most singular scene, which cannot fail to astonish the beholder. Neither can they fail, while thus exciting his unfeigned admiration of the wonderful works of nature, to call most vividly to mind the character and attributes of their Great Creator; and so ever blending a lowly spirit and a grateful heart with the wise pursuit

of knowledge, the student of mysteries such as these will escape the entangling mazes of a false and feeble, because a godless philosophy.

As the tide was low, we were enabled, after exploring the inmost recesses of the great cavern, to walk out a short distance seawards over the tops of the causeway columns, as we may call those shorter ones, the crowns of which lie beneath our feet, and here too the view, looking backwards, of Fingal's Cave, was magnificent; but a dense and drizzling rain was falling thick around, and the increasing wind drove the briny spray with considerable force against us, so returning by the great causeway along shore, in the direction of the landing place, we collected our scattered forces, stepped into the boat, and in a few minutes were again on board the Princess Royal. In spite of the indifferent weather, we were all highly delighted with this portion of our trip, and such was the peculiar character of the scene around, and so impressive its effect, that it was afterwards a question with us whether the gloomy grandeur of that murky day was not in some measure to be preferred to the more garish sunlight.

By this time a steamer with her motley crew

and cargo of enthusiastic tourists, had approached the island shores; and although those great and unrespecting levellers the ocean waves, were heaving around with a howling wind, beneath a lowering sky, we could see the not altogether undismayed indulgers in the picturesque, descending the vessel's sides, then hovering in mid-air for a few brief moments of *suspense*, and finally and fearfully wedging themselves into the tossing boat, the skirt of an occasional surtout hanging into, and no doubt absorbing its own small portion of the liquid main. One very tall columnar looking thing in black, was at first regarded as a spare funnel, but as it descended with the rest into the boat, and was observed to wear a white neck-cloth, we afterwards concluded that it must have been a clergyman.

Although few things which don't fairly soil one's fingers are so odious as comparisons, we could not help remembering how recently we had seen the Giant's Causeway, nor did we hesitate to give the preference to Staffa. The Causeway is, in one respect, if possible more wondrous, from the beautiful and perfect regularity of its prismatic forms, but Staffa is far more singularly varied,

and Fingal's Cave, with its high o'erarching roof, its vast columnar sides, and far perspective depth, with ocean's ceaseless murmur through its caverned jaws, is certainly unequalled by the sister marvel of the Emerald Isle. There is no necessity, however, for forcing any comparison between the two, and each may repose with perfect self-reliance on its power to please, although several features of Staffa, and above all its entirely insular position, which seems so to disconnect it from the world, and give—

"the plain
Of ocean for its own domain,"

turn the balance in its favour. It is seldom that one is sternly called upon to weigh the relative degrees of the beautiful and picturesque, although this may occasionally happen in the very case in question, when some unhappy Southron finds himself unwisely seated between a son of Erin and a Scottish Celt.

Speaking of comparisons, their odious nature, and that of those who make them, we remember well being once about to take our regretful departure from a beautiful Highland harbour, half encircled by a most varied range of mountains

rising from the sunny shore in sylvan majesty, and then bearing proudly upwards a magnificent old ruin,—

"Mid woods and wilds, on nature's craggy throne,"

with a sky as bright as ever brooded over the cloudless Parthenope, and the whole reflected from a glassy surface, so still and placid that the mighty deep seemed

"Even the gentlest of all gentle things."

The whole visible earth, including sea and land, reposed in an atmosphere of beauty, except a couple of steamers, which were spouting an atmosphere of their own, and threatening every moment to shiver into fragments that fair mirror of reflected rocks and hoary ruins. After gazing around in silent admiration, we stepped into the nearer steamer, when an acquaintance, who had marked our wonder, addressed us with,—"Sir, I assure you this is nothing to the Bay of Naples." We immediately went on board the other vessel, although its destination was just the reverse of that which we desired.

On leaving Staffa, the afternoon greatly disim-

proved, and the rain became heavy, with a strong gale right a-head, so we were well pleased to cast anchor in Iona Sound, close off the famous ruins of that sacred isle. Late as it was a boat ran alongside in a moment, with a hungry looking crew of keen-eyed greedy guides, who would scarcely leave us to "our own sweet will," and a quiet evening's contemplation of the glories we had seen.

CHAPTER III.

RUINS OF IONA—SOUTHERN SHORES OF MULL—ISLAND AND SOUND OF KERRERA—BAY OF OBAN—DUNOLLY CASTLE—CONNEL FERRY—OPENING OF LOCH ETIVE—CASTLE OF DUNSTAFFNAGE—OPENING OF THE SOUND OF MULL—THE LADY'S ROCK—DUART CASTLE—ARDTORNISH CASTLE—CASTLE CHONE—AROS CASTLE—BAY OF TOBERMORY—SCENERY OF LOCH SUNART—LOCH MOIDART—CASTLE TYRIM—THE RIVER SHIEL—LOCH SHIEL—GLENFINNAN—KINTRA BAY.

The early morning of the 4th of July was moist and dull, all things around us being shrouded in a veil of misty vapour; but it cleared in the course of the forenoon, and the sun soon showing his radiant countenance, spread life and light along those barren shores. The Mull, or eastern boundary of the Sound, seemed to consist of low hummocky rocks of richly coloured granite, interspersed with small patches of bright green verdure, and occasional slips of good looking agriculture, with some snug farm houses, the whole backed by uprising mountains. The Iona side, with the exception of some low rocks of the same red granite, showing themselves here and there along the shore, ap-

peared to consist of gneiss heaved up into higher knolls and small hills behind, with similar patches of grassy ground. A stretch of tolerable land lies slopingly between these hills and the strand, and a lengthened range of cottages forms the village facing the sea, with one of the small Parliamentary churches, and a manse some little way behind. Near the church are the ruins of the Augustine nunnery, dedicated to St. Oran, and on the slope which terminates in a point extending northwards, stand the more imposing remains of the ancient cathedral of St. Columba, and other noted relics of antiquity.

It was the Sabbath morn, but the church service not being expected to commence for several hours, we thought the time in no way mispent in landing to meditate among the tombs. It is certainly, however, one disadvantage of the life we were at this time leading, that any regular attendance on stated ordinances can scarcely be relied on, so much in some respects are we at the mercy of winds, tides, and lee-shores, and are thus too frequently obliged to shape our course accordingly; but our private services are performed on board with regularity, and it is hoped we all know

and remember, that wherever we be, the same heavenly guidance is vouchsafed to those who seek it, and thus, though we "take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead us, and thy right hand shall hold us." The greater disadvantage is, perhaps, that of the sailors, with whom this erratic mode of life is so much more frequent and prolonged, but they seem always well disposed to take advantage of whatever opportunities occur; and we have endeavoured to occupy their leisure hours on ship-board beneficially, by placing expositions of the great Christian doctrines in their hands in various forms.

It was not without a mournful feeling that we found ourselves again among these venerable ruins. It had been our fortune to visit Iona many long years ago, with a young enthusiastic German, who has since, "spurning the unprofitable yoke of care," attained a name of note in the literature of his country, and we now thought of bygone times more than became the interest of the sacred scene around us. It is probably one source of the confusion of misty minds like our own, that the suggestive principle should often be so strong within

us as to cause the past alone to be seen through the present, while the present is only dimly caught during some distant future. At all events, we now found ourselves insensibly reverting towards early days, when the sun was brighter, and the grass greener, the waves more lustrous, and the mountains far more magnificent than they have ever been in these degenerate times.

> "Then did no ebb of cheerfulness demand
> Sad tides of joy from melancholy's hand."

But, indeed, when we looked along the silent shore, and beheld the memorials of other days, and the many mournful emblems of decay and desolation which lay so thick around, what marvel was there that Time's mutations, and that heritage of woe, of which sooner or later all must be partakers, should have changed or chilled a feeble human heart. This region of ruins, once the "luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion," is indeed a solemn place, though now too well known, both from good and bad descriptions, to excuse much further infliction of our tediousness. We

think that however ancient may have been their origin, and there is no room to doubt the residence here of St. Columba in the sixth century, the admitted visitations of the hostile and iconoclastic northmen, and the frequent reconstructions consequent on their misdoings, may be adduced as reasons for assigning to several of the buildings a much more modern date than that of the introduction of Christianity to the Western Isles.*

The great era in Highland ecclesiastical history and architecture, is the twelfth century, or rather the reign of David I. Prior to that period, there was nothing but the church founded by Columba, and commonly called the Culdee church.† After the twelfth century, the more florid and obtuse

* It is known that the best houses of the ancient Highlanders were formed of strong wooden stakes, with wands or wattles intertwined between them; and it is the opinion of some historical antiquaries, that even the church of Iona, though the See of the kingdom, was probably composed of the same unenduring materials in the days of St. Columba.

† The ancient monks or priests were called in Gaelic *Gillean-De*, or servants of God (singular, *Gille-De*), from which term, by corruption, arose that of *Culdee*.

system of the Popish Church made its way, and in Iona both *orders* may be said to be exemplified, —the former in the simple chapel of Relig-oran, the latter in the larger, more elaborate cathedral. The small and lonely chapel, the solemn burying-ground, the broad-shafted cross, or rather stone with a cross in relief upon its face, the animals and symbolic emblems with which it is adorned, and the still legible syllabic "Kill," are signs of the times of good Columba's day; while the cloister, the pointed window, the tombstones within the chapel, and the tall and narrow-shafted cross, all tell of the subsequent time to which we have referred.

We shall here quote a few paragraphs regarding Iona from Dean Monro, who wrote in the year 1594, and was an eye-witness of its then condition. "Within this Isle there is a monastery of mounckes, and ane other of nuns, with a paroche kirke, and sundrie uther chapells, dotat of auld by the kings of Scotland, and by Clandonald of the Iyles. This abbay foresaid was the cathedrall kirk of the bishops of the Iyles, sen the tyme they were expulsed out of the Isle of Man.

Within this Isle of Kilmkill there is an Sanctuary also, or Kirkzaird, callit in Eriche *Reilig Orain*, quhilk is a very fair Kirkzaird, and weill biggit about with staine and lyme. Into this Sanctuary there are three tombes of staine, formit like little chapels, with ane braide grey marble or quhin staine in the gavil of ilk of the tombes. In the staine of the ane tomb there is written in Latin letters, TUMULUS REGUM SCOTIÆ, that is, the tombe ore grave of the Scottis Kings; within this tombe, according to our Scottes and Erishce cronikles, ther laye *Fortey-eight crowned Scotts* Kings, through the quhilk this ile hes been richlie dotat be the Scotts Kinges, as we have said. The tombe on the South side forsaid hes this inscription, TUMULUS REGUM HIBERNIÆ; that is, the tombe of the Irland Kingis; for we have in our auld Erische cronikells that ther were *four Irland Kingis* erdit in the said tombe. Upon the North sydé of our Scottes tombe, the inscription bears, TUMULUS REGUM NORWEGIÆ, that is, the tombe of the Kings of Norway, and als' we find in our Erische cronikells, that Cœlus, King of Norroway, commandit his Nobils to take his boday

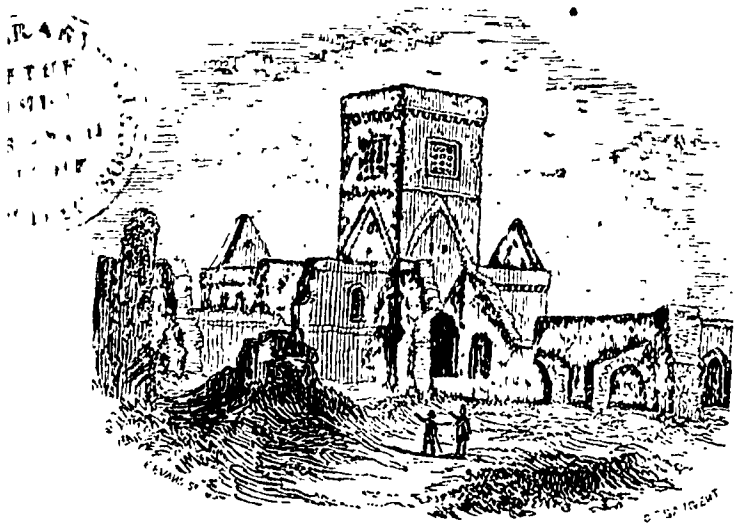
and burey it in Colmkill, if it chancit him to die in the iles, bot he was so discomfitit that ther remained not so many of his armey as wald burey him ther; therefor he was eirded in Kyles, after he stroke ane field against the Scotts, and was vanquisht be them. Within this Sanctuary also lye the maist pairt of the Lords of the Iles, with ther lynage. Twa clan Leans, with ther lynage. MacKinnon, and MacQuarrie, with ther lynage, with sundrie other inhabitants of the haill iles, because this Sanctuary was wont to be the sepulture of the best men of all the iles, and als' of our kinges, as we have said."

The first of the ruins which we approach from the village is the Nunnery of St. Augustine, or rather all that remains of it,—its chapel. We here find the tombstone of the last prioress, of date 1511, with a Latin inscription in the Saxon character. A causeway partly dismantled (old stones for building Highland huts being almost as good as new, and far more convenient, seeing that they are ready dressed), leads to St. Oran's Chapel, probably the most ancient of these ecclesiastical remains. It stands in a large enclosure

called *Reilig Orain*, "a very fair kirkzaird," as Dean Monro calls it, but now exhibiting no vestige, so far as we could perceive, of any *tumulus*, either of king or kaisir. We pass, however, on the way towards it, one of those magnificent old crosses, a few of which still continue to cast a melancholy splendour among the memorial tombs, and seem to preside over grassy graves with a grey and ghastly beauty

"That mocks the gladness of the Spring."

There are many curious old monuments within and around St. Oran's Chapel. One of these was found inscribed with the most ancient Irish characters, which a learned clergyman deciphered as a Latin inscription,—"MacDonuill fato hic," as much as to say that,—"Fate alone could lay Macdonald low," while another equally learned Theban reads it simply in the Celtic vernacular, "Cros Domhail fatusich," or in plainer English, "the cross of Donald Longshanks!"



The Cathedral lies a little to the northwards of this mournful *Reilig Orain.* Whatever may be its actual age, it now possesses enough of "hoar antiquity" to throw an air of solemn grandeur over the general aspect of the scene, and produces, indeed, a most imposing effect, with its massive square tower rising to the height of 70 feet above the lonesome graves, the grassy verdure of its foundations almost washed by the murmuring sea, at this time flowing gently between the lowlier shores of the Sacred Island, and the stern and rocky coast of the opposing Mull. Near the Cathedral altar we find a remarkable supported

tombstone, that of the Abbot MacKinnon, with an inscription round the margin:—"Hic jacet Johannes MacFingone, abbas de Hy, qui obiit anno domini Millesimo quingentessimo cujus animæ propitietur Deus Altissimus, Amen." It is said that the hollow spaces of the letters composing this inscription were originally full of melted silver, which being kept most beautifully clean and bright, produced especially during sunshine, a very dazzling effect. So valuable a material, however, was too tempting for permanent endurance; and as soon as the more stringent terror of ecclesiastical discipline was withdrawn, the "spirit of the times" would no doubt put the silver in its own pocket. The most ancient dated monumental stone of these sepultures is that of another Abbot MacKinnon, in St. Oran's Chapel, described by Pennant as a *tomb*, though on its own inscription it is called a cross:—"Hæc est *crux* Lauchlini MacFingon et ejus filii Johannis Abbatis de Hy facta an. dom. mº. ccccIxxxix." There are many other monuments of Bishops, Abbesses, and Knightly Warriors. Most of the latter are distinguished by the great crusading broadsword across their bodies, perhaps indicating

their adventure to the Holy Land, and willingness

> "To pour their heart's-blood over Palestine,
> In honour of the sacred war for Him,
> The God who was on Earth and is in Heaven."

Near the Cathedral are various fragmentary buildings, the remnants probably of the Monastery and smaller Chapels. The ruins to the north are called "The Bishop's House;" and, westwards from the Convent, rises the "Abbot's Mount," which overlooks the whole. The view around is varied and interesting, and on this occasion was enlivened by groups of country people all in their best attire, some seated on grassy mounds, reposing after their morning journey, others lounging about the cottage doors, or interchanging friendly greetings with their country cousins.

We were well pleased to find that the present Duke of Argyll has shown a praiseworthy interest in these long-neglected relics of bygone ages, and has taken steps to prevent all farther desecration. His people are now forming a walled foss around the precincts of the Cathedral, constructed, if our

memory serves us, after the manner of a ha-ha fence, so as to defend without screening these far-famed ruins.

Within this protecting boundary stands one of the finest of the ancient crosses of Iona. It is of great height, extremely massive, and exquisitely carved in high relief, with rhunic knotting. Indeed, the freedom of design, and its excellent execution in a material so ill-adapted for sculpture as mica-slate, has been elsewhere recorded as surprising. This giant-cross stands on a large granitic basement, cut into three steps, diminishing in size as they ascend.

Most of these monumental remains, whether

upright or incumbent, are now irretrievably defaced and weather-worn, many of them, we doubt not, out of place, and not a few o'ergrown with weeds and grass. The length, indeed, of the prevailing herbage almost surprised us, considering not only the near neighbourhood of a populous village, but the perpetual advent of thunderous steamers outpouring their eager hordes,—so that we rather expected to find the grass all worn away by the frequent feet of pilgrim tourists. Meanwhile the Duke has certainly taken the proper preliminary steps, by constructing protecting walls, and accrediting one or more natives to exercise a vigorous surveillance on all intruders, especially such as carry bags and hammers. The Lady E—— C—— lately informed us, that a couple of years have not elapsed since a fingering knave of a mineralogist knocked off poor Abbot MacKinnon's nose. After this announcement of the wrong, we think he will scarcely venture to show his face with it in public. The next proceeding of the noble proprietor will probably be to get the surface ground carefully cleared from around the sepulchral stones and other monuments, these monu-

ments themselves where overthrown, raised and supported, the broken fragments *collated*, if we may so speak, and joined together, and the whole gradually brought into as perfect a state as existing circumstances may admit of, and without unnecessary removal from their proper sites, when such can be approximately ascertained. It will then be for the zealous student and the skilful antiquary to pore over these now fleeting memorials, to explore whatever has been written regarding them whether in ancient or modern times, to avail themselves even of the legendary lore which still floats mistily around them, and may aid, although it has also misled, in such researches,—and so a firm body of historic truth may be presented by what are now "*disjecta membra.*" We understand that in deciphering the sculptured characters of these effigies, it will be found useful to apply a flat surface of chalk, and therewith gently rub the *raised* letters,—while such as are *hollow*, may be carefully filled up with the same material in a pounded state. Casts might also be taken of various figures by a moulder in Paris plaster, and thus the field of enquiry extended to those at a distance, who may

not have it in their power to study these important historical antiquities in their natural site.

" Lone Isle ! though storms have round thy turrets rode,
Though their red shafts have sear'd thy marble brow,
Thou wert the temple of the living God,
And taught Earth's millions at his shrine to bow.
Though desolation wraps thy glories now,
Still thou wilt be a marvel through all time
For what thou hast been ; and the dead, who rot
Around the fragments of thy towers sublime,
Once taught the world, and sway'd the realm of thought,
And ruled the nations of each northern clime."

As we returned from the Cathedral, we met the country people in decent, well-dressed knots, and " sprinklings of blithe company," congregating upon the village in their way to church, but as we were under the necessity of clearing the Sound before the turn of tide (and might not, perhaps, have made much of a Gaelic sermon at any rate), we got under weigh at a rather graceless hour, though with a fine free wind, for Oban. The navigation on leaving the Sound is intricate, the ground being every where foul with rocks. But the view backwards on the holy fane of Iona was beautiful. We had no sooner got fairly clear of

the rocks than the wind fell, and our onward voyage along the southern shore of Mull was tardy in proportion. However, the coast scenery was magnificent, with bold cliffs and fine headlands of varied form, backed by loftier terraced mountains. Ennimore-head is particularly striking in its aspect, being of great height, crowned by lofty and irregular cliffs of a greyish-red colour, with the smoother ground sweeping down from their basis in nearly perpendicular mantles of the richest grassy green. The scenery around the entrance to Loch Buy was also much to be admired, and towards the close of day we were all especially delighted with a truly sublime, though doubtless not unfrequent effect, that rose behind us in the western distance,—the Mare Islands and other portions of detached land seeming of purple blackness, while the evening sky—(what sight on earth can equal gorgeous cloud-land !)—was as yellow as the purest gold. Night came upon us before we could approach our wished-for haven.

On going on deck next morning (5th July), we found the Island of Kerrera a-head of us, and a "Scotch mist" dropping from the shrouds,

and darkening all around. Though Caithness is now a most safe and loyal country, it was a brave boast in the thirteenth century, when Alexander II. declared he would "plant his standard on the cliffs of Thurso." Determined to extirpate the Danes from their settlements in Scotland, he assembled both his fleet and army at Kerrera, where he was unfortunately attacked by fever, of which he died. It was also at Kerrera some years later (1263), that Haco, King of Norway, rendezvoused with his own and the allied Island fleet (amounting in all to 160 sail), prior to his ill-fated descent upon the coast of Ayr. The result of that descent was the famous battle of Largs, and the consequent termination of all Norwegian intermeddling with the Western Isles. His Scottish Majesty certainly "sarved old Haco right." We were much pleased with the scenery of the Sound of Kerrera, which reminded us in some of its features of the Kyles of Bute, being full of wild though beautiful amphitheatric recesses, each with its little group of dwellings within the shelter of surrounding trees. MacDougal of Galanach's residence seemed charmingly placed, not far beyond the opening of a salt-

water reach called Loch Feochan, which runs into the mainland of Lorn. We ere long opened the beautifully sheltered though capacious Bay of Oban, in the inner part of which we cast anchor, and as the weather still continued wet and rather foggy, we kept our cabin for the day, occupied in reading and in writing letters.

Towards evening the rain was succeeded by a warm pearly and not unpleasant vapour, which lying in denser horizontal masses along the sloping sides of the surrounding hills, became softened and almost subdued as it blended with the quiet waters. The fair white dwellings showed their gleaming semicircular front along the inmost portion of the shore, while the "mooned horns" of the encompassed bay advanced on either side their varied range of rock, and field, and tree. Behind stretched the mountains of the mainland of Argyll,—to the right a picturesque retreating shore of varied aspect,—while to the left "'mid sylvan pomp and rocky majesty," rose high in air, crowning a rugged steep, the ancient Castle of Dunolly. Seawards, the lengthened Island of Kerrera extended the sheltering barriers of the land-locked bay, and by screening the more open

horizontal lines of distant ocean, which might have otherwise come in view, completed a picture of the rarest beauty, softened harmoniously by that pervading veil of pearly lustre, and presenting the features rather of some magnificent lake of inland waters, than of Scotland's barren shore.

Before night-fall we took the smaller of the Cutter's boats to try an hour's angling for herring with the white fly, being encouraged so to do by the sight of numerous other boats with the same object in view, which were slowly making way over the glassy surface of the bay. The Oban people had been very successful in this sport during the preceding week, and the herrings caught were in good condition, though taking greedily this coarse unusual bait. The fishing in question is generally prosecuted either in early morn or during evening twilight. The rods are the rudest implements of ash or other sapling, the lines extremely coarse, and the flies made of the feather of a goose's wing. The point of the rod is kept a yard or two beneath the water, so that the lure swims far below the surface, being lowered less or more according to the depth which

the herrings themselves may be found to occupy at each particular time. The boat is rowed gently onwards, while the rods, leant slopingly over stern or gunwale, are worked up and down "with a short uneasy motion." We took no herrings, however, by our motion, nor did any one, so far as we could learn, that night; but we caught abundance of lythe or pollack (*Merlangus pollachius*), an excellent eating fish, of sethe or coal-fish (*M. carbonarius*), which is not to be despised, and a few very small codling,—besides enjoying the exquisite scenes by which we were surrounded.

The morning of the 6th was fortunately fine. We started in the long boat soon after breakfast, to pay our respects at Dunolly House, explore its now ruined stronghold, and take a passing glance of the finely intermingled view of sea and shore commanded by its rocky knolls. The Chief of MacDougal (who represents the ancient Lords of Lorn), was from home, but we were kindly received by his family, and requested to abide his expected arrival in the afternoon, which, our time being limited, we declined to do. The position of the

modern mansion is rather more snug than imposing, being placed backward among trees, and behind the shelter of the shoreward height on which the castle stands. But a more sweeping view from the windows may be regarded as of less consequence in a place where a few steps outwards yield a wide command. We made our way to the castled rock by an easy smooth ascent. This ancient fortress consists chiefly of a strong square tower, with curtains, and a court,—within which latter we found confined that bird of Jove which roused the poet's wrath, if wrath ere dwells in that majestic mind.*

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* As we always carry Wordsworth's poems in our pocket, we have requested the Captain's clerk to transcribe the following lines for edification, while we ourself mend our pen.

COMPOSED AT DUNOLLY CASTLE.

" Dishonour'd rock and ruin ! that, by law
Tyrannic, keep the Bird of Jove embarr'd
Like a lone criminal whose life is spared.
Vex'd is he, and screams loud. The last I saw
Was on the wing ; stooping, he struck with awe
Man, bird, and beast ; then with a consort pair'd,
From a bold headland, their loved aëry's guard,
Flew high above Atlantic waves, to draw

The view from Dunolly Castle is as varied as striking. Umbrageous mountains arise behind in various rocky ranges—

" Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view."

Strange gigantic masses of rock, each with its own

Light from the fountain of the setting sun.
Such was this prisoner once; and, when his plumes
The sea-blast ruffles as the storm comes on,
In spirit, for a moment, he resumes
His rank 'mong free-born creatures that live free,
His power, his beauty, and his majesty."

ON REVISITING DUNOLLY CASTLE.

" The captive bird was gone;—to cliff or moor
Perchance had flown, deliver'd by the storm;
Or he had pined, and sunk to feed the worm:
Him found we not; but, climbing a tall tower,
There saw, impaved with rude fidelity
Of art mosaic, in a roofless floor,
An eagle with stretch'd wings, but beamless eye—
An eagle that could neither wail nor soar."

* * * *

THE DUNOLLY EAGLE.

" Not to the clouds, not to the cliff, he flew,
But when a storm, on sea or mountain bred,

wild legend, lie scattered between the higher terrace and the shore, and resemble dismantled turrets, or portions of ruined castles, rather than natural shapes of stone. But the seaward aspect (and the projecting promontory is almost sea-surrounded) forms the noblest features of the scene. To the west the mountains of Mull, and the opening of the lengthened Sound, with portions of Kerrera and the Maiden Island, almost at our feet :—north-westwards the green Lismore, backed by bolder ranges of the misty Morven, with the Linnhé Loch receding into the far distance ; while the lofty heights of Appin and Barcaldine rise behind the bright broad bosom of Loch Etive,

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Came and deliver'd him, alone he sped
Into the castle dungeon's darkest mew.
Now, near his master's house in open view
He dwells, and hears indignant tempests howl,
Kennell'd and chain'd."

We found him (*Aquila albicilla*) on the present occasion, in good health and spirits, not chained, though " cabin'd, cribb'd, confined " within a somewhat narrow barred-up space, with his back to the wall, and the wall betwixt him and the sea. He had no view, but an excellent appetite, having on a recent occasion swallowed almost at a mouthful an enormous conger eel.

which opening almost beneath the castle's northern bounds, ascends far inland, laving the base of many a mighty mountain, till it retires a "shy Winander" behind the dark gigantic masses of Ben Cruachan. To the south are countless isles, nameless or hard to name, but all most fair to look upon on a beautiful summer morning, their mingled craggy rocks and sunny verdure, encompassed by that interlacing sea. These, and other features, though in themselves fixed as the earth's foundations, assume in truth an ever-changing aspect, as the beholder with mild benignant eye stands gazing from the lonely battlements, or ranges the wooded heights and varied hollows of these romantic grounds.

Descending to the shore, we embarked and pulled outwards to the Maiden Island, and then hoisting sail we turned eastwards to Dunstaffnage. The shores though craggy, are beautifully varied, wherever rocks are absent, with the richest green, and on our larboard bow was the Lochnell property, jutting out in a finely formed hill, on one end of which stands a pillar-like tower, beyond which an embayment opens, surrounded by some low and richly wooded land. Further back an

old and very ruinous looking castle (that of Barcaldine, as we understood,) was dimly seen, surrounded by some ancient trees. Beyond this the mountains rose into lofty picturesque forms, finely wooded towards their base. We passed close under the low rocky headland on which the Castle of Dunstaffnage stands, and bounded onwards to Connel Ferry. There we landed on the southern shore, at a jetty near a small but comfortable looking inn, and proceeded onwards on foot that we might see with full effect the turmoil produced in the rushing tide, when encountered by a line of low but lengthened rocks which cross this narrow entrance to Loch Etive. When the tide has partially ebbed, this rocky barrier seems to retain a portion of the flood-water above it at a higher level than that which is below, and the consequence is a somewhat unusual phenomenon,—a salt water-fall or sea cascade. Our visit was not opportune to behold it in its highest perfection, as the tide had been for some time flowing, and so filling upwards; but notwithstanding the effect was striking, almost sublime, resembling as we conceive (for we never saw them) the roaring rapids of an American river. It was at all events "a pretty con-

siderable water power" (as the Yankee said of Niagara), though with this disadvantage, that at regular intervals it runs the wrong way. Now the "American powers" are always in the right direction,—at least they think so. Nothwithstanding the terrific roar of this Highland *Malstroem* when the tide has ebbed, we understand that during high-water boats and even small vessels pass over it in perfect safety.

We continued our walk upwards for a couple of miles, having beautiful rocks uprising here and there upon our right, covered with the richest shrubbery, until we reached a point from whence we enjoyed a magnificent view up Loch Etive, the huge Ben Cruachan in the background, with his lofty summit enveloped among brooding clouds. Headlands of bright verdure, with occasional uprisings of the grey brown rock, projected from a swelling country on the right, opposed on the left by the varied outline of far loftier mountains, the lower portions of which were richly though irregularly wooded, while across the broad and river-like Loch Etive rose the ruins of Ardchattan Priory, built in the thirteenth century by John of Lorn, and afterwards destroyed by Colkitto

(Alaster MacCol) during Montrose's wars. The Secretary was delighted with this noble scene, and sat himself down upon the grassy shore, a skilful limner, to convey its leading features to his sketch-book. C. C. H. bethought him of his pheasants, and Fife's far kingdom, and sighed away his sorrow in cigars. Ourself, as usual, did nothing, but our heart was not unprofitably filled with a sense of God's pervading goodness in so adorning this fair earth which we inhabit.

Returning leisurely to Connel Ferry, we got on board our boat, and although both wind and tide were now against us, our able-bodied crew soon brought us to Dunstaffnage, where we landed to inspect the ruins of that ancient regal castle. As a building it is not of great extent, and Kings must have had few retainers when it was in use to receive a royal household. It is generally described as " rearing its giant form from the pinnacle of a lofty rock which overhangs the ocean," or in some such mode of speech; but whatever it may have been in former days, we now found it standing very quietly, with no terrific frown, upon a low though rocky knoll, its base unwashed by any boisterous waves, though surrounded by a peninsular

DUNSTAFFNAGE CASTLE ARGYLLSHIRE.

flat, which is itself almost surrounded by the sea. However, it forms a good old feudal picture notwithstanding, as every ancient castle needs must do, which possesses its unavoidable because essential share of craggy rock, and a sprinkling of wood, whether natural or acquired, to beautify its lonely waters. But it is the high historic interest of Dunstaffnage which throws a kind of misty halo round its name. No authentic knowledge seems to have been gained by any one regarding its earliest history, although some maintain that it was built by Ewen I. King of Scotland. In regard to Ewen himself, it may perhaps be inquired with as blissful ignorance as that of the old woman of Pittenweem, when informed that the great King of Prussia was dead:—"Aye, aye, the King o' Prushy,—and wha was he?" Now, like Dirleton, we have our doubts, and one of these is whether Ewen I. is a bit better known than Frederick II., at least on quietly consulting several Celtic friends as to "Wha was he?" we have never met with any one who could clearly tell us when or where he was either born or buried, although these two events, as being supposed to bear somewhat on biography, are not seldom ascertained in the life

of meaner mortals. The nearest point we have ever yet attained to is this,—that Ewen was *at least* contemporary with Julius Cæsar. We presume, however, that the castle in question did serve as a strong-hold for occasional resort by the remoter generations of the royal family, when the kingdom of Scotland in truth consisted chiefly of the Argyll country,—and a far rougher and more outrageous one we fear it was, than that which now rejoices under the benigner sway of John Douglas Edward Henry Campbell, keeper of Dunstaffnage.

Whatever may be the date of its first foundation, it is matter of authentic history that its means of defence were strengthened and increased about the beginning of the fourteenth century, by Alexander MacDougal, Lord of Lorn, into whose family it had previously fallen. We presume that this was Allaster of Argyll, who married the third daughter of the Red Comyn, stabbed by Robert Bruce, and "made sicker" by Kirkpatrick,—a deed of ruthless butchery, which afterwards induced the fiercest enmity between the royal house and that of Lorn. Dunstaffnage was, however, soon after besieged and taken by Bruce, when he had defeated John of Lorn, son of Allaster, in the

pass of Loch Awe. It is said that a Parliament was at this time held in the castle, at which the proceedings were conducted in Gaelic. It is to be regretted there were no reporters.

But the most noted and peculiar portion of Dunstaffnage history pertains to the famous stone of fortune, sometimes called the Stone of Scone, now adhering to the bottom of an antique chair, dismantled though of "royal state," in Westminster Abbey. Although all stones are tolerably old, this one is said to be of so remote an age as to have served Jacob for a pillow on the plain of Luz, from whence it was conveyed to Egypt by Gathelus, a prince of Athens, and then to Spain, where he settled with his wife, a lady of the name of Scota, one of Pharoah's daughters. This Gathelus was an active lad, and erelong invaded an "islande opposite to Spaine, in the north, which a rude people inhabited, having neither lawes nor manners." The name of his admiral was Hiber, and on the 5th day they gained the shores of Ireland, which of course was denominated Hibernia,—the adherents and descendants of the prince being afterwards called Scots, no doubt out of respect to Mrs. Gathelus, although her husband,

like a certain licentiate of the Danish church in Feroe, was truly the father of his people. From Ireland the travelled stone was brought by Fergus I. to Scotland, as some say, in the year 330 B.C., although others maintain that the said Fergus did not begin to reign in the West of Scotland till 503 of the Christian era. In this case he must have attained a respectable time of life, if he had actually left the Emerald Isle 833 years previous. But a difference under a thousand years is not much thought of in the earlier periods of Scottish history. The stone bore along with it the tradition, that wherever it abided *there* should be the kingdom of the Scots, or, as old Boethius has it,—

> "Ni fallat fatum, Scoti, quocunque locatum
> Invenient lapidem, regnare tenentur ibidem."

The precise period at which it first graced the shores of Loch Etive may be regarded as uncertain, but it remained in Dunstaffnage till the year 834, when Kenneth II. transported it to Scone in Perthshire, in token of the establishment of the Scottish kingdom in a district of the country which had previously pertained to the Picts. There the successive kings of Scotland were

crowned upon its cold foundation, till the time of John Baliol, when it was seized by Edward Longshanks, and conveyed to Westminster Abbey, where it may now be seen in a most unimposing position, in the chapel of his namesake the Confessor. We of the north country had long to wait after its removal for the fulfilment of the ancient prophecy, but we knew how to bide our time, and when our own " gentle Jamie" acceded in 1603 to the throne of England, we doubt not Loch Etive's waves, which had murmured at the sacrilegious interference of the first Edward, now leapt with glee around the green plain of Dunstaffnage.

The castle, in its present state, is an irregular four-sided building, placed upon a rugged mass of conglomerate rock, the sides of which have been partially picked away, so as to produce a more precipitous descent beneath the walls. Its circumference is said to be about 400 feet, and the battlements are still high and of tenacious strength. There are three round towers of unequal size, connected by a curtain, and a square building has been placed in more modern times upon the inner area of one of the towers. There is also a poor

dwelling house, of still more recent date (1725), the outer windows of which are perforated in the ancient wall, and a skewer of *rizzard haddies* was peacefully protruding from the same, under the cover of a brass gun, said to be a wrecked trophy of the Spanish Armada. We know not precisely how this latter point may stand, but as we read upon it, "Assverus Coster, me fecit, Amstelodam: 1700," we were naturally curious to enquire how it should have come into Argyllshire about the year 1588, in the blustering days of the gay and gallant Duke of Medina Sidonia. But there was no one to resolve our doubts, and so we concluded that if this "child of loud-throated war" is actually of the date deciphered near the touch-hole, then historic truth seems here

"More honour'd in the *breech* than the observance."

Yet, on reflection, why should we expect that an unlettered, above all a kilted nation, should know aught of breeches?

Proceeding a little further westwards through a young plantation, we came to a sweet and lonely chapel of ancient structure, surrounded by a burial-ground which is known to share with Iona

the sepulchral honours of Scottish kings and chieftains. There is here an extraordinary piece of sculpture, in the form of an angel of most graceless proportions, with large wings, a huge trumpet in either hand, and inscribed,—"Arise, ye dead, and come to Jesus Christ." Many modern tomb-stones are now intermingled with those of ancient times, and several of the latter have obviously been removed from their original sites, and placed over the remains of meaner mortals. We suppose it is all one now to their respective tenants.

We required a strong pull cutter-wards to take us to the Maiden Island, after which we hoisted sail, and ran rapidly into the bay of Oban. In the evening we went ashore to see some llamas, beautiful creatures of the camel kind (of course the natives of Argyllshire call them Campbells) from South America, originally imported, and afterwards bred in this quarter, through care bestowed by Mr. Stevenson. Though at this time under cover, they are said to be hardy, and were obviously gentle and familiar. An elderly female (the grand llama), mother, we believe, of almost all the rest, had a young one with her of only a

fortnight old, a high-legged staring infant, with that combination of grace and awkwardness so usual in the young of the larger quadrupeds. These animals produce only a single offspring at a time, and go with llama for eleven months. Lord Braedalbane has lately purchased a portion of the town of Oban and the neighbouring country, and we were told it was his intention to beautify the environs by plantations on the hills around.

We glided serenely from this pleasant bay in comfortable time next morning (7th July), which was fortunately fair and bright. While passing across towards the Sound of Mull we saw many familiar friends with new faces, and this more prolonged as well as varied enjoyment, is one advantage possessed by a voyage over a land journey. In travelling by land there is to be sure a frequent circumbendibus, by which we may enjoy the sight of objects fore and aft,—but many a fair vale and sunny mountain is seen once and no more forever. Stern old governors, or even worse, uncompromising uncles, desire to eat their chop or cutlet somewhere at a certain hour, and so the youngsters (we fondly fancy for a moment we are one) are hurried onwards with ruthless haste, instead of

rambling in " dingle or bushy dell" of that wild wood, or gazing with almost objectless delight in crystal streams, from some moss-covered bridge of antique form. " All ready, sir," says a civil, if not obsequious voice, and so in you pop your head, and then, be it scarlet-coated guard or simpler footman, it matters not,—

> " But that two-handed engine at the door,
> Stands ready to shut once, and shut no more,"

till you have darted in sixty minutes through a dozen miles of country, every square yard of which might have made the fortune of Salvator Rosa. Now your Cutter has not only a more open way about her, but she takes her courses like a strong-winged falcon, beating about till she has made herself familiar (saving actual contact) with each projecting point and far-receding bay; and so, as we have said, " the old familiar faces" present themselves with many a changing aspect. At this time we had still in view Kerrera, a fine island of beautifully varied form, though of no great elevation,—Oban, its crescent bay and gleaming dwellings,—Loch Etive, with " loud-resounding surge," (it has a far cry to Loch Awe,) and its

guardian powers, Dunolly and Dunstaffnage, and the green Lismore, with gently sloping plains of richest pasture, separated by an open sound from Morven's rocky shore.

On nearing the entrance of the Sound of Mull, the romantic strait which separates that island from the mainland of Morven, the wind was unfavourable, but the air around us was bright and sunny, and the scene exciting as we tacked from shore to shore. This Sound is narrow, though much broader and straighter than the Kyles of Bute. There is not much wood, yet there does exist a sprinkling here and there, all the more prized from its scarcity, and there are several old castles, picturesquely placed on rocky promontories. We shall briefly notice these as we proceed.

Soon after leaving Lismore light-house, and before coming abreast of Duart Castle, we passed the "Lady's Rock," the scene of an attempted act of cruelty, in the earlier part of the sixteenth century, generally known as the subject of Miss Baillie's Family Legend. Lauchlan Catenach Maclean of Duart had married a daughter of Archibald, second Earl of Argyll, with whom it may be presumed he lived on bad terms, whatever may

have been the cause, although the character of the act alluded to depends, in some measure, on that cause. No man has a right to expose his wife, in consequence of any ordinary domestic disagreement, upon a wave-washed rock, with the probability of her catching cold in the first place, and the certainty of her being drowned in the second; but some accounts say that she had twice attempted her husband's life, and so assuredly she deserved to be most severely reprimanded. Be this as it may, Lauchlan carried the lady to the rock in question, where he left her at low water, no doubt desiring, that at high water she would be seen no more. However, it so chanced that her cries, "piercing the night's dull ear," were heard by some passing fishermen, who subduing their fear of water-witches, or perhaps thinking that they had at last caught a mermaid, secured the fair one, and conveyed her away to her own people, to whom, of course, she told her own version of the story. We forget what legal steps were taken (a sheriff's warrant probably passed for little in those days, at least in Mull), but considerable feudal disorders ensued in consequence, and the Laird of Duart was eventually assassinated in bed one night, by

Sir John Campbell of Calder, the brother of the bathed lady. We hope that this was the means of reconciling all parties.

A little onwards we came to Duart Castle itself, now the property of Colonel Campbell of Possil, an honoured friend. It forms a fine determined-looking feature, standing out upon a green though rocky promontory. The modern mansion seeks the shelter of wooded grounds at some distance back. Times have altered, and so have the tastes of Highland lairds. They are wise both in their own generation and that of their successors, for it is cold work sitting on a rock almost encompassed by the sea, even though there should be something of a dull damp castle roof and walls above and around you. Mr. Perston's yacht, "the Wave," passed us ere long, running in an opposite course. She seemed a nice-looking craft, apparently about thirty tons. Several brigs and other vessels were, like ourselves, beating up the Sound, and our superior rate of sailing was pleasantly exemplified by the ease with which we speedily o'ertook and passed them.

The ruins of Ardtornish Castle are the next remnant of Highland antiquity. They stand

upon a grassy point, projecting from the Morven shore. This castle is of small size, at least in its present state, consisting chiefly of a square tower, and some fragments of outworks. It was, however, a place of great importance in other days, and a chief residence of the Lords of the Isles. Here they held their so called Parliaments, or feudal courts, and from this now forlorn and dilapidated keep, John d'Ile, in 1461, in character of sovereign prince, granted commission to certain "well-beloved cousins," empowering them to enter into a treaty with Edward IV. of England. As we made our way upwards by successive courses across the Sound, the seaway became somewhat enlarged, and the mountains, though receding, rose in fine sweeping outlines to a great height, the lofty range of Ardnamurchan being seen in the north-western distance, shutting up the entrance of the Sound. The Castle of Aros frowns from its green headland on the leftward shore, presenting as usual a square keep with remains of outworks, while both natural and planted woods rising behind add much to the beauty of the scene. Prior to this we had passed on the Morven shore the opening to Loch Aline, and tacking again across

from Aros, we found ourselves abreast of another, though apparently less important ruin, Castle Chone. In regard to the county of Argyll, it has been remarked that the only kind of tories not found here are ora-tories, there being no chapels attached to the strongholds of the Hebridean chieftains, and whatever improvements may have been introduced into their buildings of stone and lime, these still retained many of the ruder features of the unmortared Scandinavian burghs. "Nothing," as the Messrs. Anderson remark, "could be more wild than the situations chosen for these fortresses: sometimes on detached islets or pinnacles; more generally on promontories surrounded on three sides by the sea; and on high precipitous rocks commanding an extensive view, and a ready communication with the water. Straight and narrow stairs, little better than stone ladders, and arched vaults, were a frequent mode of access; and in some cases, between the top of these stairs and the main building, yawning chasms intervened, across which, as occasion required, a slender drawbridge was lowered. Rude but strong buttresses propped up the walls, which occasionally were continued to a distance from the principal keep, so as

to form a court or ballium. But great extent is not to be looked for in these buildings. Their dimensions are small, and their accommodations slender and simple, compared with the edifices which in the south remain to attest the warlike propensities and state of ancient times." "The castles we have alluded to, which form such interesting objects in the landscape, and the many others throughout the west coast, were probably, or most of them, erected by the island chieftains, after the downfall of the Norwegian influence, when some of them began to arrogate to themselves an independent sway. There is no foundation for the very great antiquity assigned to some of those buildings. The round Scandinavian fortresses were erected without the use of mortar; but the mixture of stone and lime, and the arched doorways and windows, show that the Gothic style of architecture was known when the square-shaped castles were commenced, and that they are of a comparatively recent period. On the accession of the Hebrides to the Scottish crown, Alexander III. set vigorously to work, in repairing and increasing the number of the strongholds of the kingdom: and the recorded accounts of the sheriffs

and public officers of the day still remain to attest the expenses they cost him. Not content with treaties, he encouraged his subjects to extend and strengthen their defences, and those on the west coast were peculiarly styled 'overbands against the Danes.' At that period the French and foreign artizans introduced into the kingdom the accommodation and provisions for defence displayed by them on a more magnificent scale in the English garrisons; and hence, in the buildings in question, an obvious imitation of the Normanic castles, while those of the island chieftains themselves partake of the like peculiarities."*

Proceeding onwards we passed the property and residence of a Mr. Sinclair, which seems in the course of improvement by plantations, and also the estate of Drimnin, belonging to Sir Charles Gordon, Secretary to the Highland Society, both upon the Morven shore. The immediate coast on the Mull side was now high, precipitous, and richly clothed with beautiful natural woods. A narrow channel opened between it and a lovely green island called Colay, and through this as we glided along, the

* *Guide to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, p. 310.

town of Tobermory far in the bay beyond, and all its surrounding features, were seen as in a moving panorama. Stretching away upon the starboard tack, we then ran back into the bay as soon as we had cleared the northern end of Colay Island, and the effect was almost magical. The bay itself land-locked by the island,—the town with its white houses surrounding a portion of the shore, extending irregularly up the higher ground behind, and varied by pier and shipping,—the whole neighbouring steeps richly adorned partly with natural wood, but chiefly by the plantations of Drumfin, a delightful residence of MacLean of Coll, which stretch along the southern side, and cover all the lower grounds in that direction. The situation of Drumfin seems singularly fine, rising from a lofty terrace amid the wooded ground, while a fine cataract is seen to pour its silver waters in two great streaming sheets over the umbrageous rocks. Inland, as we were told, for we did not land on any part of Mull, the mansion-house commands a view of a fresh-water lake, which near, though at a considerable height above the sea, is fenced from the latter by a peculiar narrow ledge of rocky heights. Backwards and above all tower the range of lofty

mountains. The town of Tobermory, at least its lower and more modern portion, was commenced about fifty years ago, under the auspices of the British Society for the Encouragement of Fisheries, but though very useful as a protecting haven, and as a place of general commerce in a small way, it has not, we understand, fulfilled as a fishing station the anticipations of its projectors. It looks, however, like a pleasant summer residence, and the constant steamers which now call in, must be found a great convenience. One of these, the Brenda, came roaring in while we were there, having made the southern circuit of Mull, and visited Staffa and Iona, after leaving Oban in the morning. The town's-folk have judiciously cut walks all along the face of the precipitous ground, which overhangs the sea on the right-hand side and quite round the northern hem of the Bay, so as to enable themselves in their leisure strolls to enjoy an extensive view of the western opening of the Sound, and the lofty range of Ardnamurchan. About this time we dined *inter alia* on some excellent sea-trout obtained at Oban, and which we found deserving of the highest consideration, whether simply boiled *au naturel*,

or under more savoury appliances with salt and pepper.

We now struck across from Tobermory towards the mouth of Loch Sunart, one of the most picturesque and finely varied pieces of salt-water scenery to be seen in all Scotland. This far-stretching narrow and tortuous sea-loch, extends about twenty miles among the hills, running westwards beyond Strontian, and within so short a distance of the Linnhé Loch as to give a peninsular character to the great district of Morven, which forms its own southern bounds. The entrance seems at first so closed by islands as to present a most impervious aspect. One of these, called Risca, is of small dimensions, and comparatively low and wooded, but Oronsay, and above all Carnich, are large high and rocky, singularly wild in form, and generally bare of wood. Over the low Risca appear the richly wooded and variously formed steeps and knolls which bound the loch, and these are everywhere backed by bold and broken outlines of what may be better named mountains of rock than rocky mountains. To the right is soon seen the mouth of a branch called Loch Teacus, its narrow entrance opening between

two low and rocky headlands, the loch itself enclosed and backed by finely formed mountains, with steep slopes and hanging woods, while Carnich continues so to shut the scene, that no one suspects the existence of the narrow strait behind, and so Loch Sunart properly so called, remains not only invisible but unimagined. Turning, however, into a difficult and narrow passage, the upward portion of the scene opens in all its beauty; and a finer combination of mountain precipices, with lower ranges one rising behind another backwards from the water's edge, many of them wooded in the most gorgeous manner, with rocky promontories and intervening grassy slopes enlivened by receding cottages and slips of cultivated ground, cannot be seen among the British islands. The evening was fine, the wind fair, the narrow waters rippled only by a gentle breeze, and we glided most serenely within the darkening shadows of the great mountains, in the eyes of whose lonely dwellers we doubt not the sight of the beautiful Princess Royal, with her full swelling snowy sails, advancing along those finely wooded shores, must have added greatly to the glory of such a lustrous sunset. Yet we fear that our Highlanders, though

themselves a picturesque, are not a picture-loving people, and we sometimes wonder what Dugald M'Cuaig of Dingwall did with the great £500 prize painting which (to his wife's unbounded astonishment) he drew at the meeting of the Association for the Promotion of the Fine Arts in Scotland.

Loch Sunart seemed well supplied at this time both with birds and fishes. In some particular spots the gulls were literally in thousands, all screaming and tumbling on the top of each other, with a view to get the sooner to the surface, where some small shoals of herring fry were swimming. We also saw good-sized sethe gamboling awkwardly on the top of the water, preying we doubt not likewise on the herring fry. These latter are in a rather painful predicament when driven by cruel kindred from the sheltering darkness of their blue profound, to the garish light of day, there to be swallowed without remorse by gulls and guillemots. The gulls were of various kinds, and of different ages and states of plumage,—the greater and lesser black-backed, the herring, the common, and the kittywake gulls, also marrots and guillemots innumerable, with oyster-catchers, and a few wild ducks, to say

nothing of the sea-lark tribe along the shores, piping from their little rocky waveless creeks. So narrow are these inland waters, that we could often distinctly hear the sweet singing of the land birds intermingled with the wilder clangour of the sea-fowl. There was a large whale at this time in the loch, to the great annoyance of the fishermen, who feared the destruction of their nets by its ponderous bulk. Night fell upon us soon after we had passed a green hillock rising from the water, and still bearing the foundations of an ancient castle. We anchored off the harbour of Salen, erected by the Board of Fisheries, and where the Princess Royal consequently felt herself quite at home.

The morning of the 8th of July was bright and sunny, so weighing anchor at an early hour, we continued our run up Loch Sunart, as far as Sir James Miles Riddell's residence at Strontian. The upper reaches of the loch are still extremely fine, though not of so peculiar and striking a character as those nearer the entrance. We landed for a short time, while some of our people were foraging for milk and eggs. The house is a pleasant, irregular, old-fashioned, cottage kind of

dwelling, very snugly placed, and the environs delightful, being deeply embowered in shrubs, with no want of the larger kinds of forest trees, the walks laid out in a somewhat labyrinthic order, while a sparkling stream comes murmuring down the glen, and is crossed by a bridge which spans it close upon the shore. Some of the lower windows open into the varied parterres of a flower garden, and the sight of moss-roses, mimuli, &c. was refreshing to seafaring men, who enjoy with highest relish during the sweet serenity of a summer morning, the unaccustomed sparkling of the dewy grass, and "Flora's earliest smell." Sir James, we believe, possesses a great extent of property in this peninsular territory of Ardnamurchan, but we can easily conceive from the aspect of its higher portions, that compared with its vast range, it is probably more picturesque than productive. Lord Waterford occupied this portion of the estate not long ago as a shooting quarter, and among other philanthropic exertions endeavoured on one occasion to awaken the benighted people to the performance of more active duties, by tying the parson's horse to the rope of the church bell.

The lead mines of Strontian are situated higher up the valley, and were thus beyond the range of our pedestrian limits. Besides the common ore, they are known to be rich in the production of fine calcareous spars, and this quarter is also the original locality of that peculiar earth (first analyzed by Dr. Hope), now known as the carbonate of strontian. The proprietor, in a very praiseworthy manner, introduced the straw plait manufactory some years ago, for the sake of productive occupation to the young women on the estate, but we believe the practice has been attended by less continuous advantage than among the natives of the Orkney Islands. There is a good substantial-looking inn close upon the shore where we first landed, and an excellent Parliamentary road leads from the shores of the Linnhé Loch over by Glen Tarbert (here we have again the word so frequently applied to narrow necks of land connecting great peninsular expansions with the main), and down the northern shore of Loch Sunart as far as Salen, from whence it crosses the country to the foot of the lengthened narrow lake of fresh water called Loch Shiel.

We have said that Loch Sunart is itself ex-

tremely narrow, as well as tortuous,—two features from which it derives much of its peculiar beauty, although we speedily found that what is interesting may be likewise inconvenient. In the course of our downward way this forenoon, while tacking in one of the narrows, near the place of Laudil, and giving as wide a berth as we could to the northern rocky coast, the strength of the tide, or perhaps an eddy, took us with a heavy though unseen hand, sweeping us a few yards nearer the southern shore than we intended, and so we grounded on a sandy bank. The bottom was fortunately smooth, soft, and entirely free of stones, so that the only inconvenience we experienced was the loss of time, being compelled to wait until the tide both ebbed and flowed. We were going gently at the time, with no great way upon the vessel, as we had just put about, and would have almost instantaneously cleared the bank, had not the tide sucked us shoreward. There we were, however, in a fix, so we put out a pair of crutches, or enormous wooden legs, to prevent our heeling over as the tide receded, and as there was nothing more required of us but patience, we landed on the Morven shore.

Walking down the side of the loch (rod in hand), we soon crossed some wild moor-land of peat earth in our way to a small rivulet, which descended from the hill-side with the usual picturesque accompaniments of rocky banks, fringed with birch and alder. We took a few casts, and caught six or eight small trout, which we rather desired to return to their moist abodes, but were outvoted on the score that they would fry as garniture to other fish on board. We were joined in the course of our walk by two intelligent farmers of the name of Maclachlan (a clan to which we feel much attached, seeing that the chief of that same is now our oldest friend). These gentlemen having been successful as cattle-dealers, had purchased a small estate along the south or Morven side of Loch Sunart, and their dwelling-place of Laudil being opposite our sand-bank, they had enjoyed the advantage of seeing us take up a fixed position in the morning. We understood from them that their property extended about five miles along the coast, and three miles inwards (or rather upwards) from the water's edge. There is still a fair sprinkling of wood on several portions of the lower grounds, and their

opinion seemed to be that whatever cultivation may have prevailed in former times must have been carried on at some height among the hills, both by reason of certain ridges which are still observable in these quarters, and judging also from the frequent remains of large oaks and other fine old timber found buried nearer shore. From the latter circumstance they infer the existence at some former period of dense forests, stretching along these lower grounds. After digging in one of the mosses, and reaching apparently to its bottom, they came to an original surface of rushes in the position of their natural growth, and they there also found a hatchet of the ordinary form, with the helve so entire and fresh as to be fit for use. They were accompanied by a wild-eyed youth of middle-age, who answered to the name of Gregorson. He gazed alternately at each of us with long-continued stares, and more especially at our self as the ugliest of the party, and therefore the one most likely to excite in him a fellow feeling. When he observed us pick up a large beetle (*Carabus clathratus*) from the moss, and pop it into a snuff-box, his wonder knew no bounds save those of highland breeding, but as we volunteered no ex-

planation of our conduct, his pursuit, whatever our's might be, was evidently that of knowledge under difficulties. When one of the party lighted a meerschaum-pipe, and another took a pinch of snuff, he seemed hopeful that the imprisoned beetle would be brought to light. But it was not so ordained, and as he had never heard of entomology, he no doubt believes to this day that we either put beetles in our "Speaker's Mixture," *vice* tonquin beans promoted, or actually stick the coleoptera in our nose.

Mr. Sellar, formerly connected with the improvements of Sutherlandshire, has purchased a property in this district, somewhere to the southward of our present quarter. He is stocking it with the Cheviot breed of sheep. Morven is still altogether without roads, no modern improvements have been attempted, the population is considerable, and the people frequently ill off for want of work. A few fishermen in this vicinity are preparing their boats and nets in anticipation of the herring-fishery, of which partial symptoms have been manifested within these few days. They had rather a good take in Loch Sunart last year.

The Princess Royal rose like a feather from her

sandy bed, as soon as the flood-water came upon her, so we went on board, carrying with us for an hour our new made friends—the douce Maclachlans and the wilder Gregorson. We descended in the first place as far as Salen, off which we had anchored the preceding night. This harbour lies in a pleasant little bight (cooler than that of Benin) just where the Parliamentary road strikes off for Moydart, leaving the Sunart shore. The Secretary having some official business here, we landed. The pier is most substantial, being built of large flat stones, and backed by natural rocks higher than itself. It slopes downwards into the water, and affords a shelter to boats at all times of tide. We were somewhat surprised to find a bobbin manufactory about to be established here. The proprietor of the woods, as we were told, has agreed to deliver his birches at the mill door for seven shillings a ton. This seems a low price, but whether the bargain may be good or bad, it is a melancholy and fantastic thought to dwell on, that these fair woods, cut into pieces of a few square inches, are so soon to be set a whirling amid the ceaseless din and flocky atmosphere of a cotton mill in Glasgow. Every thing is beautiful in its

season, as O'Connell said to the curds and cream, and cotton mills are extremely useful in their way, —but whoever may have seen, as we did, the splendid crags, and the fair silvery stems of that

"Most beautiful of forest trees,
The lady of the woods,"

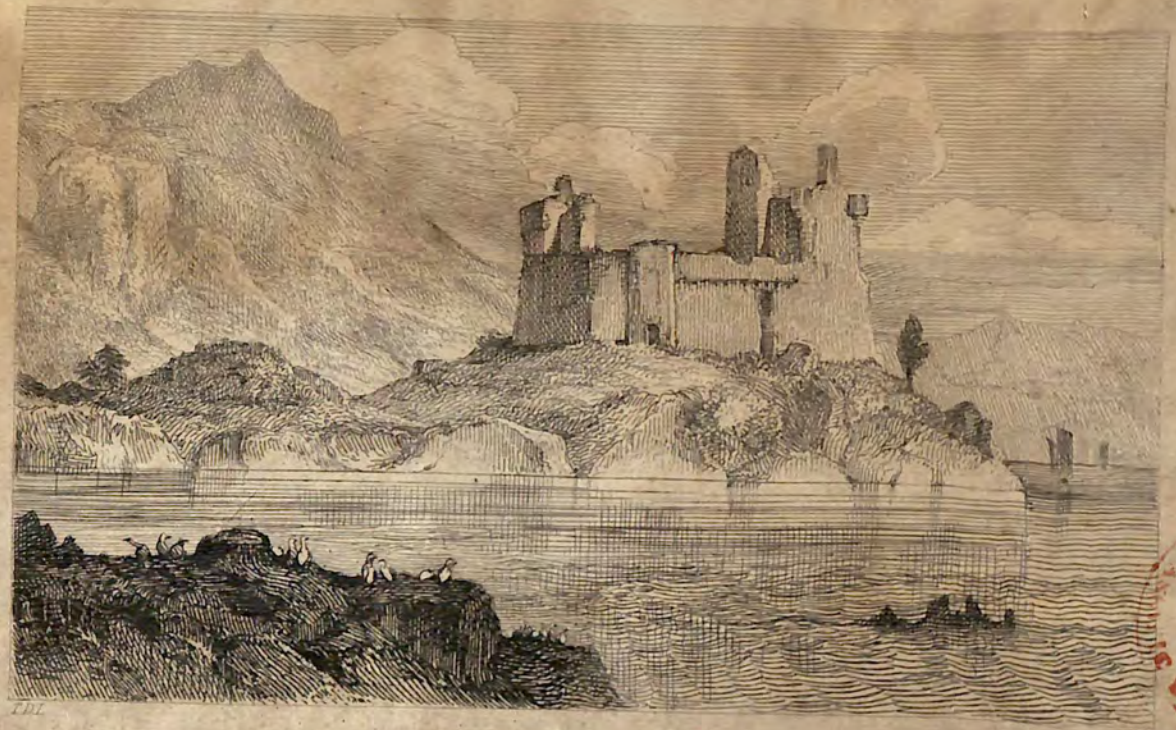
might have almost consented to go with undarned stockings for a month, sooner than that the insidious substance should be wound around their very hearts. Besides, if Bobbin & Co. have made too good a bargain, the greater is the pity that such fringing woods should be dispoiled even to the laying bare of old majestic mountains, while the proprietor, whatever may be made of cotton, is himself worsted. Going on board again from Salen, we continued our beating down the Loch, and sat on deck in the full enjoyment of its magnificent scenery, till the increasing darkness dimmed the Ardnamurchan range. The signification of the name we understand is this,—*Ard na more huan*, the high land on the great ocean.

9th July.—Our Cutter behaved herself last night really as a Princess Royal ought to do, making her way bravely against wind and tide, and a

heavier swell than ever of old was seen in Bond Street. We made no particular inquiries down below, but we suspected from the unsettled state of the furniture that some rather uproarious change had taken place externally, and as Halkett observed our little stock of books was suddenly converted into a circulating library. After clearing the mouth of Loch Sunart last night, it became necessary, it seems, to enable us to weather Ardnamurchan Point, that we should stretch across into the more open sea almost as far as Coll, after which, running northwards towards the island of Muick, we were enabled in the course of the morning to bear upon the entrance to Loch Moydart. There had been a heavy roll from the west, which accounted entirely for the displacement of the books. This morning, however, we found ourselves quietly at anchor in Loch Moydart, and land-locked in one of the most extraordinary scenes of rocky and barren desolation which we ever witnessed.

After writing letters we went ashore, the Secretary being desirous to inspect the fishery harbour of Kintra, and ourselves feeling much inclined to kill a grilse. We had, however, a long

pull in the boat, for the water of the bay shallows very much between the anchorage and the shore. Loch Moydart is a sinuous rock-surrounded arm of the sea, by no means equal to Loch Sunart in beauty or grandeur, but interesting from its wild seclusion, being almost entirely destitute of human dwellings, or at least of such as meet the eye. As we approached the landing-place upon the southern shore, we came abreast of the ruins of Castle Tyrim, an ancient stronghold of the Clanranald, and interesting from the fact of its having been intentionally burned by its proprietor in 1715, before he set out to join the Earl of Mar, prior to the battle of Sheriffmuir, from a dread, it is said, lest "during his absence with the flower of his clan in the service of the exiled Stuart, it might fall into the hands of his hereditary enemies the Campbells." No man would like to set fire to his own house, but it is less unpleasant to admire such heroism in others. It is still a sturdy ruin, uprising boldly from a rocky promontory, which, however, is so low behind that the building seems as if it would be entirely sea-surrounded when the tide is full. It is of a pentagonal form, and consists of a series of curtains and towers enclosing an



CASTLE TYRIM. INVERNESS SHIRE

open court, into which the windows open, so that its external aspect presents nothing but great dead walls. All the angles are rounded, and the bending line of the perpendicular confers upon the whole a very ancient aspect. This barren promontory, and a small wooded island near it, constitute, we understand, the last remaining territorial property of the present Clanranald, chief of one of the most ancient and powerful of the Highland families, but whose possessions, we regret to say, are thus diminished. The sole native of the castle, so far as we could see, was a young kestril, which we captured. He had large, deep, delightful eyes, a little blue beak, yellow feet, the sharpest claws, and feathers intermingled with "puddock hair." When first secured he kicked with his hind-legs like a little vixen, swearing he would never yield,—when we saw him again, he was sitting on a sailor's shoulder, swallowing pieces of *podley* as fast as he was able. It was here that Ranald, son of John of Ila (before alluded to) died in 1386, "in his own mansion of Castle Tirim, leaving five children," from one of whom, Allan of Moydart, are descended the ancestors of the Captains of Clanranald.

On reaching the upward portion of the bay we found the scenery exceeded what the morning's prospect from the Cutter promised. The hills, indeed, continued to wear somewhat of a savage aspect, but their rocky broken forms were picturesque, especially when seen at intervals through racking mist, and various openings into lonesome and to us unknown vallies, created a kind of mysterious interest. The enclosing land to the north-westwards, which now seemed to shut up the entrance of the Loch, and from its peculiar position identified itself with the mainland, was the rocky and mountainous island of Teona, while higher up is Clanranald's wooded isle, called Rishka (?). The narrow portion of the Loch above the latter, when ascended in a boat, becomes extremely fine,—wild craggy mountains, yet everywhere adorned by natural woods, and high upon a semicircular sloping shelf, surrounded by rocky eminences, a lonely farm, with cultivated fields even above the wooded region, and a pathway winding up the face of the hill, beneath the crags towards them. Meanwhile along the solitary shore innumerable thrushes with "tuneful bill" were filling the very air with glad responses.

The angling portion of our party now advanced

from the castle along the southern shore, towards a fine stream, or rather river, which empties the fresh waters of Loch Shiel into the briny basin of Loch Moydart, after a run of not more than a couple of miles. We had obtained permission to try the sport for an hour or two from an English gentleman, by whom the right of rod-fishing had been secured. We believe his name was Isdale, and beg now to thank him for his kindness. On our way we passed a small Catholic chapel (the people here being much of that persuasion), placed on a beautiful green flat at the base of the cliffs, and near it a little thatched cottage, the dwelling of the priest. Following in the course of a foot-path, it brought us into a wild ravine, the bottom of which, as well as the base of the hills, was covered with huge angular masses of rock, which had fallen from the loftier grounds. Not a tree was visible. Winding down towards the little estuary into which the river Shiel is disembogued, we came to a curing station, where the salmon are cut in pieces as soon as taken, packed into small tin cases of a pound or two each, hermetically closed, and then subjected to heat by boiling. The men employed are all from Aberdeen. Not

long ago this fishing was rented for £8 per annum, which was paid with difficulty, and the country people were so careless or so ignorant as scarcely to be able even to mend their nets. Now a rent of £200 a-year is paid, and a handsome additional sum is no doubt obtained either by proprietor or tenant for the privilege of angling. This last endearing term has brought us to the river side, which is large and rapid, well frequented by sea trout, grilse, and salmon, but also well swept by net and cobble at its mouth, as well as near a fixture higher up across its course.

We made our way upwards to a rocky ledge, by the side of a deep but streaming pool, about half a mile above the junction with the sea. We had not cast for more than five minutes when we hooked a fine fish. He went out like lightning up the stream, and then made a spring of several feet into the air, as if to show his beautiful form and lustrous colour. This, however, was all we saw of him, for not liking the taste of cold steel, he somehow contrived by this manœuvre to throw the hook out of his mouth. We took another cast or two with our customary placid resignation, and when dragging our line towards us somewhat

carelessly, and just about to lift backwards for another throw, we found we had hooked a second fish (apparently a good nine-pounder). He was firmly fixed, for we felt him holding on tenaciously after he had made several rapid runs across the current, but he never sprung above the surface. We had to work him for a length of time, because the place we stood upon was a steep and broken bank, the rock shelving into the water, and brushwood upon either side, so that we could scarcely take him either up or down the river to a securer haven, without the risk of some entanglement. We entertained no fear, however, that we could not kill him, with time and patience on our side, and the most ordinary good conduct on his. The Captain and Dan M'Alpine joined us at this time, and admired the beauty of the salmon's graceful movements, as we alternately yielded to each other. He now made one or two violent struggles in the centre of the stream, lashing the surface of the water with his strong finned tail. This, however, fatigued him not a little; his strength seemed failing fast, his broad and silvery side was more and more upturned for want of regulating power, and so we drew him almost unresistant towards the

shore. There was a little creek within the rock, not much bigger than himself, into which we tried to turn him, directing our attendant (for we had no gaff) to stoop and seize him by the tail, as he was too heavy for the line to be of any further service in so steep a place. Dan did his best, and so did we, but salmo did the best of all, for not wishing to be seized by any sailor, he turned his snout outwards with a sedate determined motion of the tail, and made again towards the river. He was, however, by this time so exhausted, that the moment the current caught him he turned on one side and was carried a few yards downwards. Of course we held on, tried and successfully, to bring him again into still water, but the effort was too great for us both, and just as we were about to lead him gently up again towards the rocky creek, the *bit* gave way, the hook came towards its owner, and the salmon *wambling* down the water, disappeared from mortal sight. Thus we parted, probably never to meet again. We record this piscatorial accident for the benefit of our younger readers. We believe our chief disadvantage lay in the *height* of our own position, and the steep and shrubby nature of the ground behind us,

which forced us throughout the contest to bear too strongly upwards on the fish, instead of being able, by retiring backwards, to guide him towards a shallower landing-place, and by a more horizontally exerted power. The latter of course sways the creature's movements without holding too much of a depending weight upon the line. After this we killed a good dish of fish, sea and river trout combined, but saw nothing more of either grilse or salmon. We can easily conceive, however, from the general aspect of this river Shiel, that it will occasionally afford most excellent sport.

Meanwhile, the Secretary being desirous to examine a fishery harbour in Kintra Bay, which expands southwards from the opening of Loch Moydart, had in the first place ascended the river as far as the foot of the lake at Shiel Bridge. He described the passage as difficult and laborious, from the rocky nature of the narrow pathway by the river side, consisting of large fragments of stones and rocks, with an intermingled contrast of boggy ground. Near a more open mossy space he observed nets put up and rising in pallisade some six feet above the water, so that no fish could pass upwards. The next more craggy reach reminded

him strongly of his own much-loved Findhorn, and he then clambered along at some height above the river, till he reached the picturesque bridge of Shiel, placed among wooded knolls. While a pony was preparing for his ride to Kintra, he ascended to the summit of some elevated ground behind the town to sketch Loch Shiel, which from that point came forward to the eye, winding through a great extent of flattish country, but receding and disappearing backwards among finely formed mountains, with natural woods creeping up their bases. A prominent feature on the right was Benshissipole or the Fleeting Fold, which also formed one of the most remarkable objects from Loch Sunart. None of our party had occasion to ascend Loch Shiel on the present occasion, but we desire to imagine ourselves for a moment at its head. There lies a lonely valley called Glenfinnan, watered by a quiet stream, where the traveller may perceive a square embattled building, and over it a narrow tower. This marks the spot where Prince Charles, on the 19th day of August 1745, first raised his standard, when about to descend upon the Lowlands. "The ceremony," says Mr. Robert Chambers, "was performed upon a small knoll at the

head of the lake, in presence of the Clan Cameron, and the followers of MacDonald of Keppoch; the Marquis of Tullibardine, an elder but attainted brother of the Duke of Athole, performing the duty of unfolding the standard." The pillar was erected by Mr. MacDonald of Glenaladale, "to commemorate the generous zeal, the undaunted bravery, and the inviolable fidelity of his forefathers, and the rest of those who fought and bled in that arduous and unfortunate enterprise." It bears an inscription in Latin, English, and Gaelic.

The Secretary found a good road from Shiel Bridge to Kintra, though it lay chiefly through a moss bounded by a wild rocky country. It (we mean the road) was made by Sir James Riddell by statute labour, and there was a handsome church and manse where it left the Parliamentary line. There is but little field culture in the district, and that is bestowed chiefly on the potatoe crop. The people, as is not seldom the case in the Highlands, are not only indolent on shore, but averse to fishing labour. One man with whom we were conversing, said with a most rueful countenance, "This is indeed a sad season of

the year for us, for the old potatoes are done, and the new have not come into use, and so we are just *obliged to fish*." Obliged to fish! Heaven help him, we have done it often enough, and thanked our stars for laying on us such an obligation, and here we have a set of stout fellows who will lie for a week upon a rock by the sea shore, just like so many seals, except that they wont take the water, and are by no means so easily killed by blowing their noses, complaining that they are ill off, when well-grown cuddies (we don't mean asses, though we are thinking of them), are swarming along shore, and nibbling at their very toes. A man and boy whom we had seen that morning close to Castle Tyrim, could scarcely have killed less than a hundred and fifty sea fish, of small size, it is true, but certainly sufficient to sustain a respectable family of Ichthyophagists for several days. We speak from experience both of the abundance and the nutritious nature of these fishes, of which we once killed thirty-three dozen in a few hours, using a single line with six flies. But the people here and elsewhere in Scotland seem often to fish only on compulsion, whereas by a more vigorous and systematic method they

might add most materially to the comforts of their family.

The harbour of Kintra is constructed on a similar plan to that of Salen. The pier, in the form of an inclined plane, is backed by a projecting rock, and seemed an excellent piece of work. Boats can use it at low water, if they choose, but at this time there was nothing like a boat near it. It may indeed be doubted whether its position has been judiciously chosen for that of a fishery harbour. There are no houses about it, and its site is too far from the open sea. A little way above the harbour the water way is narrowed by some rocks, after which it expands again into a large bay, with subsidiaries, which at low water is left as a dry plain of some three or four hundred acres of fine shell sand. Mr. Kennedy, the factor, spoke of a project of excluding the sea from this upper expansion altogether, so as to convert it into a farm, and he even pointed out a place *below the harbour*, where dam-dykes might be carried across. It would be a droll sight to see a large pier, like a piece of Giants' Causeway, stretching along a corn field. But we infer from the idea, however fanciful, having entered any

man's mind, that the harbour itself is of little use. The Secretary, as in duty bound, pointed out the rocks *above* as the better place for operating such a scheme,—and there indeed flow-sluices could be easily erected.

The mode of travelling from Kintra Bay across the country along the nearest *road* to Castle Tyrim, is by jumping from hag to hag for about a couple of miles, and if you don't break your neck you will come at last to the mouth of the river Shiel, and then, if you can find the ferryman he will take you over, if not, you must either wait or swim. After this if you should feel wet and cold, a pretty Aberdeenshire woman, who dwells in an opposing cottage, will give you a dram, if you ask it civilly. She is the wife of the head fisherman, who did not happen to be at home when we called.

CHAPTER IV.

ISLAND OF EIG—MUICK—RUM—CANNA—COMPASS HILL—SOUTHERN COAST OF SKYE—MACLEOD'S MAIDENS—LOCH BRACADALE—LOCH SLEPIN—STRATHAIRD'S CAVE—LOCH SCAVAIG—LOCH CORRUISKEN AND THE CUILLEN MOUNTAINS—RETURN TO EIG—THE BONE CAVE—THE MAINLAND—LOCH-NA-NUAGH AND PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD—PORT EILLAN-ORONSAY—LOCH HOURN—LOCH NEVISH—GLENELG—KYLE-RHEA—LOCHALSH—EILLAN-DONAN CASTLE—LOCH LING AND LOCH DUICH—CASTLE MOIL AND KYLE-AKIN—LOCH CARRON—RAASAY—LOCH AYNORT—SCALPA SOUND—PORTREE—PRINCE CHARLES'S CAVE—CASTLE BROCHEL.

We were well pleased to get on board yesterday evening, after assembling our forces in the little bay close to Castle Tyrim, and on trying to look about us at an early hour this morning (the 10th of July), we found a strong gale blowing from the south-west, and rain descending like the cataracts of Lodore. However, we set sail by eight o'clock, getting out of Loch Moydart with some difficulty, for these Highland havens, though indispensable in their way, occasionally form a complete trap when the wind shifts. We had now terminated our exploration of the Argyll-

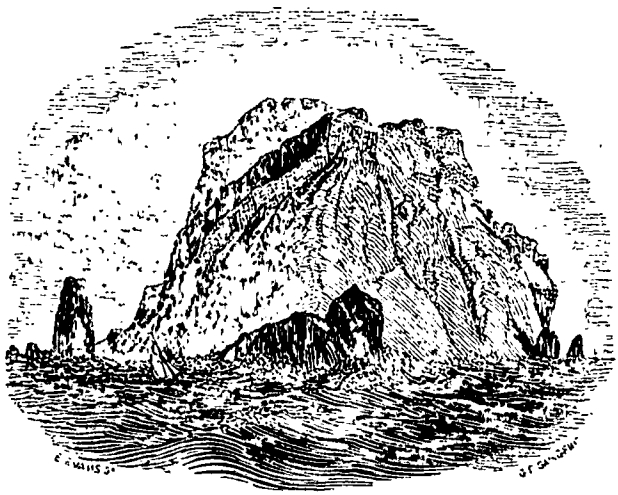
shire coasts and islands, our further progress, at least for a time, being devoted to those of Inverness-shire.

Of this day's voyage our records are necessarily few and brief. We made our way through mist and rain, and over a surging, sickening sea, along the shores of Eig and Rum to Canna. We saw from below, through the cabin skylight, the racking clouds careering past us, but our perceptions of the picturesque were few and far between, for such was the passionate fury of the elements, that we could not stand on deck. Even the Secretary who (under)stands all things, was obliged to shelter himself beneath the cabin roof. However, we took a peep from time to time, as we passed along. Eig, with its lofty and precipitous Scour rising to the height of 1340 feet above the level of the sea, is a fine object. We regretted that so unruly a combination of wind and waves should have prevented our landing to explore the cavern described by Sir Walter Scott and others, in which, about 200 years ago, some of the MacLeods smoked to death the whole of the MacDonalds. To our left lay the Island of Muck or Muick, which is said to look green

when the sun shines. We saw it was low, and believe it to be fertile. Its etymology is controverted. *Muck* is supposed by some to mean "of swine," while others derive its name from *moch*, which it seems signifies "white," an etymon most erroneously represented, when we beheld the land in question, by an aspect of pitchy blackness. Having no objection to ham, we rather adhere to the Gaelic *Elan-nan-Muchel*, or "Island of Swine," more especially as old Buchanan calls it *Insula Porcorum*.* Next in order came the more Jamaica-sounding Isle of Rum, so named we understand from a Scandinavian term signifying *spacious*. People of course differ in their views of space, as of other things, and as it has the further misfortune of being what is called an abstract idea, some excuse may be offered for the absence of agreement on the subject. But the particular portion of space in general known as the Island of Rum, is an irregular circle of about seven and a-half miles in diameter, its surface extremely

* Another meaning, we believe, attached to Muck is, that it may be a corruption of *Monk*, the island having been formerly church land, pertaining to the Monastery of Iona.

mountainous, and Benmore, its greatest elevation, attaining to a height of 2300 feet. Well may they say in Glasgow, "Rums is riz." Various heads and summits of this island produced effects approaching even to grandeur, but any one who looks at a map will see, how with a boisterous south-west wind the unimpeded surging of the great Atlantic must come rolling in between Tiree and Barra-head, and then trampling onwards to these lofty shores, may poison the pleasure of the picturesque. Besides we want words to describe the thing artistically, having tried it several times, jotting down various modes of expression on the backs of letters, the last of which ran thus:—"The effect of fine old rum is inconceivably powerful." After this we thought of the late S. H. of the Glasgow Herald, and sighed profoundly. But let no man be sulky under any circumstances, or lose his temper (as well as his dinner) by the upheavings of the injurious sea. Yet it rejoiced our hearts to cast anchor in a sheltering bay in Canna, and under the lee of Sandy, a smaller neighbouring isle.



As you enter the outer portion of this bay, a fine bold headland presents itself to the right. This is called the Compass Hill, because it is said that the power of the compass is deranged if not destroyed by its nearer influence. A high and castellated rock rises from out the strand, bearing a scarcely perceptible remnant of some ancient place of strength, to which there seems no visible mode of access but by climbing, hand over hand, an angle of the cliff. The anchorage ground though small is secure. Sandy, by which it is in part protected, is comparatively low, but Canna rises in a gradual sloping amphitheatre, with ranges of dis-

tinct basaltic columns projecting through the verdurous sward. This island belongs to a gentleman of the name of M'Neill, who bought it from Clanranald. It produces the finest possible pasture, and most excellent beef and mutton, and whatever arable ground exists upon it is extremely fertile. The laird's house is a small, exposed, treeless, bachelor-like building by the water side, and was not sufficiently inviting to induce us to go ashore, when the boat was sent to forage for milk and poultry. C. C. H. and mate Macallister did so, and ascending one of the heights, enjoyed as we can well conceive, a most commanding view of sea and shore in all directions.* In fact Canna, though small in itself, may be regarded as a kind of central point among our Hebrides. It is exactly half way between the Mull of O'e, the most southern

* The detachment above named tried at this time the alleged effect upon the compass. On first landing it was found to be the same as on board ship, and continued so half way up the hill; but immediately under the basaltic rocks which form as it were the *crown*, they found the variation to be six points to the westward. The same variation is observable at the low rocky point to the eastward of the entrance, although at no intermediate spot between that point and the summit of the Compass Hill.

part of Islay, and the Butt of Lewis, the most northern portion of the western isles; and it is also nearly equidistant from South Uist upon its western, and the coast of Inverness-shire on its eastern side. Our friends could therefore behold a vast tract of Skye and the Outer Hebrides, of Mull and the Mainland, with Coll, Tiree, and countless other islands. Our own less aspiring view from deck was not to be despised, for the clouds were now uplifted, leaving a pure translucent air, through which we could discern (a most sufficing sight) the purple peaks of the distant Cuillin mountains, over the lower and greener hills by which we were environed.

The proprietor of Canna keeps eighty milk-cows, and so must be rather well off both for cream and butter. He has also of course other stock in the way of cattle, besides 300 sheep, and never houses his beasts, with the exception of cows about to calve. He was formerly tenant of the island, but being successful in farming and other things (Canna lies a long way from the Custom House), he was enabled to make the purchase for himself. The want of a regular mode of conveyance must be of disadvantage, but we understand that dealers make their

way here from all quarters of the country notwithstanding. About fifty years ago a fat cow sold for £2, and now he obtains £7 for two-year-old stots and heifers. When a calf dies the people are in use to take off its skin and lay it loosely on another calf, and so the cow allows the latter to suck her, and herself to be milked, which she would not otherwise do but for this device,—which however is probably known to the pastoral experience of other districts. Mr. M'Neill has a couple of large farms on the other side of the island, which are let. The population by the recent census we understand to have been 260.

The Canna-nites are a peculiar people (for these parts) in their religious persuasion, being all Roman Catholics, except the laird's and one other family. Both parties, however, are upon an equality in this respect, that there is a church—for neither. But once a month the minister from Eig, and the priest from that island, come over in separate boats (we could scarcely expect rivals to row in the same) on Saturday evening to officiate on the ensuing day,—the former in the "Muckle Hoose," as the laird's is called, and the other in some smaller, or at least less favoured dwelling.

They were looked for during the evening of our visit, but as the wind was high and contrary, we found next morning that neither functionary had made his appearance. At a short distance from the landing-place are the remains of an old chapel, and a stone cross carved with the figure of a man on horseback. The people of Canna fish a good deal with the long line, and both catch and cure ling.

Finding there was no chance of sermon either in Gaelic or our own vernacular, we proceeded towards the west of Skye in the forenoon of the 11th July. The northern coast of Canna is extremely bold and fine. Rum was heavy, and the rolling effect,—but we beg the reader's pardon for any further allusion to that subject. As usual we had to beat against a strong breeze, and over a short pitching sea. However the air was brightening, and the rain had ceased. The coast of Skye was rising majestically high before us, stretching N.W. and S.E., our own course being almost due northwards, towards that wide-mouthed branching bay which rejoices in the name of Bracadale. The headlands or rather mountain range which forms

the line of coast, are magnificent, and off the western horn of Loch Bracadale we had a view of those very singular rocks, called "Macleod's Maidens." There are three of these spiry stacks, and they rise upwards perpendicularly from the sea, each on its own foundation, where we doubt not they must feel extremely cold. They stand alone in their triple glory, having no little rocks about them, from which we infer that they were never married, excepting to "immortal verse," who is a poor father and a worse husband, else he would never leave them (as the "Groves of Blarney" has expressed it), like

> "Bold Neptune, Plutarch, and Nicodemus,
> All mother naked in the open air."

The eastern side of the bay is approached along a fine bold basaltic coast, and a headland, just within its portal, presents a descending line of the most perfect perpendicular we remember to have seen. The bay itself is capacious, with various lesser arms running inwards, and there are several basaltic islands near its mouth, which answer to such names as Oronsa, Wia, Haverser, and Harlosh. Within there seemed a good extent of comparatively low and cultivated country, and Loch Har-

part stretches away to the right, into the bosom of the sheltering hills.

This central portion of the southern coast of Skye constitutes the parish of Bracadale,—the property of Macleod of Macleod. The most important changes which have been effected in it during recent years are the following :—1. The formation of a Parliamentary road almost throughout its entire length. 2. The enlargement of the grazing farms. 3. The establishment of a distillery. "The first of these variations," says the clergyman, "is a decided benefit to the parish; the second, as decided a disadvantage to its general population; and the third, one of the greatest curses which, in the ordinary course of Providence, could befall it or any other place." People will probably differ as to the two latter points.

The aspect of the day was now favourable, the sky (not the island but the empyrean) though by no means altogether clear, having brilliant fields of blue encircled by castellated clouds as pure as snow, and the wind from Bracadale was fair for a run south-eastwards towards the point of Sleat, round which we require to take our course before proceeding northwards through the narrow straits

which separate this great island from the mainland. So we tacked about, and with a free wind and a full sail, proceeded along the coast, at an acute angle with our former course. Loch Talliscar soon opened upon our left. It is a small bay with a fine bold entrance, marked by an immense waterfall on its northern horn, throwing itself almost from the summit of the mountainous cliff towards the sea. The mansion-house of Talliscar was seen within the bay, protected by a goodly grove of trees. Continuing our course south-eastwards with a gentle breeze, we had ample time to enjoy the scenic effects presented by the lofty and continuous cliffs. Notwithstanding their bold uprising, yet every little nook or sloping cranny,—each jutting frieze " buttress or coigne of 'vantage,"—wherever it was possible for vegetation to lay hold of mother earth (no *arida nutrix* in these our Western Isles), was green as emerald,—contrasting richly with the sombre darkness of basaltic rocks. The higher pastures were enlivened by flocks of earnest feeding sheep, while rock-encircled spots inaccessible to that woolly people, were tenanted by the more active and adventurous goat.

Loch Eynort next expands its liquid haven. Its general aspect struck us as comparatively tame, but Loch Britil, further onwards, enjoys the great advantage of being backed by the now no longer distant range of the truly magnificent Cuillen mountains, which at this time, however, veiled their awful fronts in a grand though almost impenetrable mantle of mysterious clouds. In the bosom of that majestic solitude lay the famous fresh-water Loch Corruisken, so noted for the desolate wildness of its scenery, but the cloudy tabernacle just referred to, induced us to postpone our entrance to Loch Scavaig by which Corruisken is approached, and pass onwards by a small island called Ilanaherda, to Loch Slepin. Of this latter the western shore is backed by the lofty mountain of Ben Blaven, which rises to the height of 3000 feet, a respectable elevation with a base so near the sea. The coast line itself is also bold, and, being of limestone, is much broken up by the action of the sea into ravines and caverns, behind and over which the land rises upwards in a steep green slope. A small slated house at some height upon the side of the hill, marks the position of M'Alister's or Strathaird's Cave. The landing-

place is in a small haven between two perpendicular cliffs which form a long narrow ravine, leading upwards to the rock in the face of which the entrance to the cave is placed. The first portion of this natural excavation is large and lofty, and of course not only damp, but dripping with continual moisture,—the percolation of water charged with lime being the cause of the descending stalactites, and marbled floor, and groined supports, which form the beauty of these subterranean chambers. We next arrive at an irregularly inclined plane of rock, encrusted over by a pale coloured calcareous deposit, which also lines the walls, and depends in graceful pointings from the roof. It seems extremely slippery from its humid surface, and is actually rather so, but its superficial texture is somewhat granular or mammillary, and its ascent by no means difficult. From its summit, which now forms the bulged irregular flooring of what may be called the second story, we behold another chamber, darkening as it recedes inwards; but the further progress of the pedestrian is cooled, and in most cases prevented, by a deep pool of pure sweet water (perhaps a mermaid's bath), into which, soon after we have

climbed the steeps, the marble flooring rapidly descends. Returning on our course, we entered Loch Scavaig, and cast anchor in 16 fathoms within the Sound of Soa, the great Cuillens towering over us, though still in clouded majesty.

We were on deck by five in the morning of the 12th July, and had the satisfaction to find that although it had rained fiercely all night long, it was now fair, and the mists were rising magnificently from rocky shore to loftier mountain. The first living object which met our eye

> "Couch'd on the bald front of an eminence,"

was what we at first regarded as a sheep, but on taking the glass we found it was a large sea-eagle, and a very old stager, we doubt not, judging from the whiteness of his head and tail, and the general paleness of his plumage. A powerful telescope brought us so near each other, that we could see his glancing eye and deep curved beak, with which he was busily engaged picking his feathery pinafore, probably to remove some clots of gore acquired during his pastoral superintendence on the preceding Sunday. We eyed him for a long

time, and his kingly presence was quite in keeping with the wildness of the surrounding scene.

The Cutter getting under weigh, took us towards the head of Loch Scavaig, passing close along what our great Novelist has named the "grisly mountains," the sides of which were enlivened by small silvery torrents, one of which is named the *Mad Stream*. The upper portion of the Bay is divided into two smaller basins, and it is the leftward one which conducts to Loch Corruisken. This is the wild and rock-surrounded lake so raved about by George Dick Lauder, the

Rev. John Thomson, Turner, and other great artists, past and present, of modern times. It is indeed a scene which passes painting. When we had neared our landing-place we took to the boat, leaving the Princess Royal cruising off and on, and made towards a beautifully sheltered natural harbour to the left, to which we were led chiefly by seeing the slender mast of a yacht, the "Wave," which had entered the preceding evening, and taken up a good position. Around a portion of this little basin rise high basaltic cliffs, over which a wild cataract poured its sounding waters. To the right the rocks become lower, and there form a sort of semi-cirque upon the entrance, thereby affording a complete protection from the sea. There is deep water all around, even close upon the shore, so that the Cutter might have come to anchor and saved our men a pull, but our prudent pilot feared the possible occurrence of one of those sudden gusts which frequently burst like tornadoes from between the cleft mountains, and moreover the narrow entrance lies between the cliffs and a sunken rock, and is by no means easy to be taken.

We landed, and made our way over some bro-

ken and disjointed ground on the right hand, towards the mouth of a brawling river, which here pours itself into the sea, not with that look of quiet and subdued expansion which usually marks the "meeting of the waters," but with a hurly-burly briskness, as if it thought to astonish the receiver-general. The mountains seemed now to rise and menace us, they looked so dark and surly. There was no human dwelling within our view, indeed none exists at all at the head of this Loch Scavaig, owing to the fearful force and rapidity with which the winds descend from the ravines, thinking no more of carrying off the roof of a hut into the air, than if it were made of thistledown. Walking upwards by the river's rocky course for scarcely more than a couple of hundred yards, we came almost with beating hearts upon Corruisken, a deep, dark, solemn piece of still water, of a peculiar leaden hue, and surrounded by such grisly terrors that one is really at first afraid to look at them. The margins are composed of vast sloping rocks, and great gigantic stones, and these hard and herbless masses rise ridge above ridge till they blend with the higher sides and summits of the mountains, seen only partially through the

racking clouds, and seeming, so unexpectedly do they appear at times above you, as if in the very act of rolling downwards. The pervading colour is an ashy brown, and there is not only a vastness, but an air of volcanic desolation about them, which we have not seen elsewhere equalled. The loftier portions of all these mountains are extremely jagged and precipitous, rising here and there into gigantic pinnacles and spires, the smallest points of which, however, would crush all the cathedrals in the earth to atoms. But the sides and bases are in many parts composed of vast rounded or tabular masses of equal-surfaced rock, steeply inclined indeed, but slightly granulated, so as to render walking, with due attention, easy. At least we found it so. Sir Walter Scott seems to have viewed them as more sudden in their ascent from the lake than they really are, for he describes the Cuillen mountains as rising "so perpendicularly from the water edge, that Borrowdale, or even Glencoe, is a jest to them." But in truth their lower portions are not precipitous, as there are various rocky platforms between the lake and the lofty mountain steeps, and it is these forlorn and sloping flats which constitute a per-

vading character of this desolate scene. Still they are steep enough in all conscience, and whether they are or not, why should a worm of the earth gainsay the feelings of the great Magician? Yet we walked with sufficient ease to the head of the lake, either pacing along the smooth summits of these sloping masses, or threading our more devious way like an otter or wild-cat, among gigantic stones as big as churches, which have fallen from the heights above, and now lie scattered like the dwellings of Edom along that desolate shore. Ever and anon we stopped and gazed around us. The dead dull lake lay beneath, the ruins as it were of a former world were scattered on all sides, and above as far as the eye could pierce through the murky clouds, rose the vast rocky pinnacles, their extremest heights obscured except at intervals, when we could behold the grim and awful giants keeping their eternal watches.

The sides of these mountains, from the almost constant atmospheric moisture, are dark and damp, but there are thousands of small silvery streaks of waterfalls coursing downwards, which occasionally catch the gleaming lights, and throw

a partial cheerfulness over the prevailing sadness of the scene. We were now far in advance of our party, and could enjoy the solemn stillness undisturbed by man or beast. There was nothing within the "visible diurnal sphere" that breathed the breath of life,—no sound, nor sight of any moving thing,—nothing but a dead and stony, seemingly a God-forsaken world. Some one has said that the existence of life in the smallest insect in the remotest desert was as much as to say "God is here;" and so we almost longed in this cloud-capped, thunder-stricken region, to hear the voice of gladsome bird or even of murmuring bee, —but all, so far as regarded living nature, was silent as the grave. Only once we heard the resounding voice of some far avalanche of rocks and stones, sent rolling down the great breast of the opposing mountain. We could see no movement on any of the sun-lit portions, and the sound was probably reverberated from some misty ravine, where a huge boulder stone, or crumbling crag (it may be a memorial mark in bygone ages), had been loosened by heavy-antlered deer, or scrambling wild-goat; but the repeated voice resembled low continuous thunder, and was a good accident

for a wonder-seeking traveller, who leaving the perilous deep, was now surrounded by a sea of rocks more perilous still. On gaining the head of the lake, we found that Sir W. S. and others, who had taken a casual distant view from the lower end, had erred here also in describing the great mountain masses, which seem to terminate the view, as descending directly into the sullen waters. On the contrary, after working one's way to an upper margin of the lake, and ascending an intervening ridge of rocks or giant stones, the pleased pedestrian finds himself looking down upon a small quiet grassy plain of more than half a mile in length, through which the feeding river wanders. We doubt not when all the up-filling snows are melting rapidly, or the thunderous floods of autumn are foaming down the mountain fissures, it will form a raging torrent "fast and furious," but when we looked down upon it (with our accustomed benignity), in spite of the somewhat frowning aspect both of earth and heaven, it was clear as crystal, and gentle "as a weaned child." We could now distinctly see the closing scene of this valley of desolation, and sitting upon a pinnacle of the rocky ridge already mentioned, we com-

manded a perfect view of all around us, both of lake and mountain. There we might have sat gazing for many an hour, but we remembered that others might be waiting our return. So we took a few fond though insatiate looks, and were fortunate in our final view, for just as we had risen to descend the rocks, there was a great break in the heavens above, a flood of far-flashing light was thrown upon the vast o'erhanging mountains, and into the gloomy gorges by which they were divided, and for a few minutes we could see glittering waterfalls and giant peaks above the wreathed clouds, and small pure breathing places through the deep blue sky,—the whole seen not only distinctly, but with an almost preternatural brightness, as if some great Magician had suddenly cast

"The light that never was on sea or land,"

to dazzle or disenchant the darkness which had for ages enshrouded that solemn scene. This splendour, however, was but of brief duration. We descended from our craggy throne, and made our way as quickly as we could to the seaward termination of the lake, passing again over the low broad-sheeted rocks along the water side. Looking backwards from time to time (almost in

terror, as if we felt ourselves pursued by some malignant demon, who hid himself the moment we turned round), we could perceive vast streams of misty vapour rolling into the hollows of the upper mountains, and obscuring each peak and pinnacle which overhung the deep ravines. The whole scene from first to last exceeded in its sterile grandeur whatever we had previously seen in this, perhaps in any other country, and reminded us of what many may have imagined (or Danby tried to paint) of the fabled valley of the Upas tree,

"Dark, sultry, dead, unmeasured."

The same deep discoloured rocks, the barren herbless mountains, no human dwelling, no bleating flocks, nor any sign of life, scarcely the light of heaven, but for that brief redeeming glory.

On reaching the lower end of the lake, just before the stream debouches, we thought it as well, in spite of anxious and expectant, possibly impatient because extremely hungry friends (for we had not yet breakfasted), to take a few casts with our rod, which we found still in the hands of a Highlander with whom we had left it an hour or two before. Although, from the peculiar colour of

the water, and its barren shores,—the want of shrubs and herbage, and consequent deficiency of insects, which chiefly haunt

"the flowery lap
Of some irriguous valley,"

we were by no means sanguine,—yet we killed six or eight excellent loch-trouts in the course of twenty minutes. We then descended to the coast, where we found our friends and the boat's crew kindly waiting our arrival. C. C. H. had caught no fish of any proper size in that part of the river where it enters the sea, and which in passing had appeared to us a likely place for grilse or sea-trout, but he found it swarming with the young of some of those migratory fishes in the state of parr. We all got speedily on board the Princess Royal, and made a very satisfactory breakfast on broiled salmon and Corruisken trouts, mutton chops, and the ordinary liquifications of tea and coffee. N.B.—We had the best marmalade on board that was ever tasted out of Rothesay.

Let us conclude with a few appropriate stanzas, not from the Lay of the Last Minstrel, but the Minstrel's Latest Lay.—

"Stranger! if e'er thine ardent step hath traced
The northern realms of ancient Caledon,
Where the proud Queen of Wilderness hath placed,
By lake and cataract, her lonely throne;
Sublime but sad delight thy soul hath known,
Gazing on pathless glen and mountain high,
Listing where from the cliffs the torrents thrown
Mingle their echoes with the eagle's cry,
And with the sounding lake, and with the moaning sky.

"Yes! 'twas sublime, but sad. The loneliness
Loaded thy heart, the desert tired thine eye;
And strange and awful fears began to press
Thy bosom with a stern solemnity.
Then hast thou wish'd some woodman's cottage nigh,
Something that show'd of life, though low and mean;
Glad sight, its curling wreath of smoke to spy,
Glad sound, its cock's blithe carol would have been,
Or children whooping wild beneath the willows green.

"Such are the scenes, where savage grandeur wakes
An awful thrill that softens into sighs;
Such feelings rouse them by dim Rannoch's lakes,
In dark Glencoe such gloomy raptures rise:
Or farther, where, beneath the northern skies,
Chides wild Loch-Eribol his caverns hoar—
But, be the minstrel judge, they yield the prize
Of desert dignity to that dread shore,
That sees grim Coolin rise and hears Corrisken roar."*

* The name of Corruisken (Corr-uisge) may be supposed to be derived from the deep *corrie* among the mountains in which its

This famed portion of Skye belongs ecclesiastically to the parish of Strath, which extending across the country, includes the Island of Scalpa, and then stretches north-eastwards by Kyleakin to the termination of that promontory opposite Loch Alsh. Although in olden times the property of the Mackinnons, the chief, if not the only landowners, are now Lord Macdonald and Mr. Macalister of Strathaird. The market town of Broadford stands on its northern shore. The sheep are chiefly of the Cheviot kind. The herring fishery, once so productive that from sixty to seventy vessels, of an average of forty tons, were

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waters lie imbedded. The Cuillen or Cuchullin range is believed to hand down to posterity the memory of one of the great Ossianic heroes. Sir T. D. L. having ascertained, during our stay in Loch Scavaig, that *Culin* was the Gaelic for *holly*, and as scrubby plants of that native tree were observed upon the small islands of Corruisken (where they were almost the sole representatives of the vegetable kingdom) he has ingeniously inferred, that this alpine district may have derived its name from the prevalence in ancient times of the tree in question. We may here observe that an extremely divergent orthography prevails in the Highlands, and the peculiarities of Celtic spelling may be judged of from the Gaelic for the parish called Kingussie,—*Ceannghiubhsaiche*, the " head of the fir wood."

yearly employed (some of them carrying several cargoes in the season), and still occasionally prosecuted with some success, is on the whole of slight value compared with former times. The cod and ling fishery prevails for about four months, from January to April. The salmon fishery is not extensive. Although steamboats have been found a vast convenience and advantage, their introduction has not been altogether unattended by disadvantages, by affording facilities to the ingress of vagrants, such as gipsies, rag-men, and other characters of a rather loose description, by whom the habit of chewing and smoking tobacco, and the inordinate use of tea, have been encouraged and increased. About £100 a-year additional has however been brought among the poorer classes, by the transmission for sale of eggs to Glasgow, but some have expressed regret that the money should be almost all spent on tea and tobacco, to the neglect of other more solid and substantial comforts.

We are informed by the minister that a practice prevailed in Skye, until within these last ninety years, of the laird claiming possession of the best horse from a widow when her husband died,—to

say nothing of what he may have claimed before the husband's time. It happened, however, that a person of the name of Mackinnon having taken occasion to expire in this parish, the ground officer, while making the usual claim in his master's name, experienced such resistance from the poor widow that he became tempted in his anger to maltreat her to the effusion of blood. She swore she would be revenged for such indignity when her son, then only an infant of a year old, should attain to man's estate. Time passed on, and again the same individual arrived upon a similar errand at a neighbouring farm, where he behaved with his wonted insolence of office, besides depriving another widow of her best horse. But by this period young Mackinnon had not only attained his eighteenth year, but was also, even at that early age, the strongest man in all the parish. Having no doubt been educated by a pious mother with a due knowledge of the old offence, and speedily informed of the second, he started in pursuit of the ground-officer, whom he overtook within three miles of the laird's house, and desired to deliver up the horse. This being of course refused, the youth immediately attacked the officer,

felled him to the ground, cut off his head, and washed the bloody face in a well by the road-side, which is still known by the name of *Tobar a' chìnn*. He then mounted the disputed horse, and riding onwards, presented himself at the laird's gate, bearing the dissevered head upon the point of his dirk. If there were such things as civil-serving men, or complacent peace-loving old butlers in those days, they must doubtless have been much effrayed at such a sight. Be this as it may, they lost no time in telling the laird that Donnuchadh Mòr, alias Big Duncan, desired to see him at the door. There he was somewhat shocked at first by the spectacle which presented itself, but on hearing Duncan's own account of the recent transaction (the only one by the bye which it would have been easy to obtain), he took into kindly consideration the inhuman treatment which his bereaved mother had received just seventeen years before, and granted him a free and unrestricted pardon. After that no ground-officer ever deprived a widow woman of her horse any more, and Duncan cleaned his dirk upon his sleeve.

We left Loch Scavaig about mid-day, and ran southwards again to the Island of Eig. The con-

siderate reader will remember that we had previously passed the latter under sentimental circumstances, which prevented our paying it that attention to which it was entitled. Eig, with its neighbours, Muck, Rum, and Canna, form what is ecclesiastically called the Parish of Small Isles. The name is supposed to be derived from *Ec*, a niche or hollow, an appellation descriptive of one of the chief characters of the island,—its being intersected by a central glen, running from sea to sea. The south-west termination of the higher land is called the Scour of Eig, while that towards the north-east is Bein-vui, or the Yellow Mountain. It is about three miles broad, with a circumference of nearly six miles. The Scour itself is an immense rocky range facing the east, and shaped like the extended battlements of a castle, although, when seen as we saw it, *end* on, it presented a strange resemblance to an enormous wave, just about to break. "The whole of this promontory," says Professor Jameson, "is perfectly mural, and extends for upwards of a mile and a half, and rises to a height of several hundred feet. It is entirely columnar, and the columns rise in successive ranges until they reach the

summit, where, from their great height, they appear, when viewed from below, diminutive. Staffa is an object of the greatest beauty and regularity, the pillars are as distinct as if they had been reared by the hand of art; but it has not the extent or sublimity of the Scuir Eig. The one may be compared with the greatest exertions of human power; the other is characteristic of the wildest and most inimitable works of Nature."*

But our chief object of interest here was the *Naimh Fhraing*, as it is called in Gaelic, or the Cave of Frances. Who Frances was, we did not particularly enquire, but the following catastrophe occurred in the cave in question. Some hundred years ago, a few of the Macleods landed in Eig from Skye, where having greatly misconducted themselves, the Eig-ites strapped them to their own boat, which they sent adrift into the ocean. There they were, however, rescued by some clansmen, and soon after a strong body of Macleods set sail from Skye to revenge themselves in Eig. The natives of the latter island feeling they were not of sufficient force to offer resistance, went and

* *Mineralogy of the Western Islands.*

hid themselves (men, women, and children) in this secret cave, which is narrow, but of great subterranean length, with an exceedingly small entrance. It opens from the broken face of a steep bank along shore, and as the whole coast is cavernous, their particular retreat would have been sought for in vain by strangers. So the Skye-men finding the island uninhabited, presumed the natives had fled, and satisfied their revengeful feelings by ransacking and pillaging the empty houses. Probably the *moveables* were of no great value. They then took their departure, and had left the island, when the sight of a solitary human being among the cliffs awakened their suspicion, and induced them to return. Unfortunately a slight sprinkling of snow had fallen, and the footsteps of an individual were traced to the mouth of the cave. Not having been there ourselves at the period alluded to, we cannot speak with certainty as to the nature of the parley which ensued, or the terms offered by either party, but we know that those were not the days of protocols. The ultimatum was unsatisfactory to the Skye-men, who immediately proceeded to "adjust the preliminaries" in their own way, which adjustment consisted in

carrying a vast collection of heather, ferns, and other combustibles, and making a huge fire just in the very entrance of the *Naimh Fhraing*, which they kept up for a length of time, and thus by "one fell smoke" they smothered the entire population of the island. Now it was to see the bones of these unfortunate creatures that we returned to Eig.

The cave, as we have said, is in the face of a craggy bank, and can be reached either from above or from below, and it suited our convenience to descend from the higher ground. The mouth, or outer arch, is somewhat spacious, but it narrows rapidly by a descending roof, and after a few steps you are obliged to go down upon all fours and crawl in on hands and knees through a space (very damp and slimy) of some yards, as if you were a fox or a badger, there being room for only one (of these animals, or yourself) at a time. But after this it opens into a very long narrow cavern, more than sufficiently lofty for any man, however honest and upright. It is pitch dark, but we explored it to the very end by means of a few wax candles with which we had provided ourselves for the purpose. The sides are rocky and irregular, the path-

way portion covered with large stones, with now and then a small projecting crag, the breadth about 14 feet, the length above 200. The bones of the victims lay scattered about the floor in various places, a considerable number at the far narrow end, to which it may be supposed the wretched creatures had retreated when the horrid choaking smoke began to roll its fatal wreaths upon them. A good many lie also near the entrance, being the skeletons of those who had clung to the hope of fresh air, or freedom, or mercy, from without. In the intermediate spaces they are few in number and apart, as if certain individuals from the huddled masses at either end had tried by a last desperate effort to change their respective positions when too late, and life had failed after a few faltering footsteps. We found the scalp of a little child at the back of a large stone, and between the stone and the cavern side, close to its opening, as if it had been making a vain attempt to creep outwards from the smoke, in ignorance of the clearer though not less deadly breath of "the lightning of fiery flame." Most of the skulls were gone, and what struck us as curious, there were scarcely any teeth lying among the stones. These me-

lancholy remains consist chiefly of the bones of legs and arms, and a good supply of shoulder blades. On our way out one of the sailors and ourself turned up a couple of flattish stones which were lying in a concealed corner. Under our's there were two of those grey dry-looking insects (*Oniscus asellus*), called in Scotland *slaters*, and a single earwig. Our companion was in better luck, for he found a buck tooth and a rusty coin. The latter seemed a farthing of Queen Mary (of Scotland's) time. The earthy clay of the cavern has still an unctuous *adipocirous* texture, and the Secretary was sensible of a peculiar odour when he first approached its mouth, which custom made more sweet. We ourselves did not perceive it.

During our subterranean investigations a wild-looking shepherd's dog followed us into the far recesses, and greatly resembled a hyena as he prowled and snuffed about among the decaying bones. It was indeed a bandit-looking scene to be enacted by men of peace. The dark shadows of the projecting rocks, the dim mysterious aspect of the inner distance, the lurid lights bringing into strong relief the weather-beaten forms and faces of the seamen who accompanied us, some standing

erect with high uplifted arms holding their wavering tapers, others stooping over the damp and slimy floor, in search of relics of the fatal day,—all combined to form a picture in strange contrast with that to which we had been so long accustomed,—the unimpeded heavens, and the heaving freshness of salubrious seas. That they are a high-minded and romantic race these islanders, and extremely tenacious of their ancestral glories, is evident from this, that during the potato harvest the pigs are put out of the way of doing mischief by being all cooped up in this same ancestral cave,—and fine mumbling work they will make of it, while grumphing to each other—*de mortuis nil nisi bones.* Now as the people eat the pigs, and the pigs the people's predecessors, it follows logically that the present natives are a race of cannibals of the very worst description. Yet they seemed a pleasant, courteous, good-looking set of lads, such of them as we came in contact with, and one little fellow of about ten years of age, who followed us into the cave, was most assiduous in dragging out the hind-legs of an old lady from an obscure corner, into which she had probably retired to be out of the crowd during the night of

the great fire. He told us too that strange sights were sometimes dimly seen flitting about the mouth of the cavern during the darker hours, and that dreadful groans and shrieks, especially of women, were often heard. We were really glad to embark again on board the Cutter.

We now ran towards the mainland, enjoying but a dim and distant view of Loch-Na-Nuagh, an inlet of the western sea, interesting in past times to the retainers of the house of Stewart. There, in the vicinity of Borradale House, on the 25th of July 1745, Prince Charles first landed on the Scottish main, and from that same quarter he embarked for France, after the termination of his singularly interesting though ill-fated attempt to redeem his royal fortunes.* We then made a

* "Removing to Lochaber," says Mr. Anderson, "the Prince lived for some weeks concealed, along with Mr. Cameron of Clunes, among the recesses of the woods and mountains bordering Loch Arkaig and Loch Lochy. At last he was enabled to join Lochiel and Cluny, who were securely secreted on the confines of Perthshire, and with whom he remained for about three weeks in the memorable *cage*, a half aërial habitation in the rocky face of Benalder, amidst the even now remote solitudes of Loch Ericht. Here intelligence reached him that two French vessels, sent on purpose, were lying waiting him in Loch-na-

tack westward till we had weathered the Ru Stour-head of Eig, which enabled us on the ensuing tack to take our course with a fair wind up the Sound

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Nuagh, whither he immediately hied him with his friends :"— " and thus was he destined," as Mr. Chambers remarks, " like the hare which returns after a hard chase to the original form from which it set out, to leave Scotland, where he had undergone so long and so deadly a chase, precisely at the point where he had set foot upon its territory." A considerable body of fugitives, with their friends, were soon assembled upon the shore, opposite the vessels. The unfortunate Prince attempted to wave the dispensation of his fortunes, by holding out prospects of a brighter season, when he should return under circumstances to ensure the means of recompensing his gallant Highlanders for all their devotedness, and all its consequences. " But the wretchedness of his present appearance was strangely inconsistent with the magnificence of his professed hopes. The many noble spirits who had already perished in his behalf, and the unutterable misery which his enterprise had occasioned to a wide tract of country, returned to his remembrance ; and looking round him, he saw the tear starting into many a brave man's eye, as it cast a farewell look back upon the country which it was never again to behold. To have maintained a show of resolution, under circumstances so affecting, was impossible. He had drawn his sword in the energy of his harangue, but he now sheathed it with a force which spoke his agitated feelings ; he gazed a minute in silent agony, and finally burst into tears. Upwards of an hundred unfortunate gentlemen accompanied him on board ;

of Sleat, between Skye and the main coast, as far as the opening of Loch Hourn. During this run we passed the mouth of Loch Nevish on our right, and Armidale Castle in Skye upon our left. This mansion of Lord Macdonald's is large and imposing in its aspect and position. There seemd a fine glen near it, with large timber trees, and newer plantations elsewhere around. The lawn-like fields in the "home department" are large, but in some cases of defective form, and the lines of arboreal

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when the anchor being immediately raised, and the sails set, the last of the Stuarts was quickly borne away from the country of his fathers." Look on that picture and on this, and let us mourn for the effect of misery and misfortune even on that representative of the ancient Scottish kings, in whose veins flowed the warrior blood of Sobieski. Time rolled his ceaseless course, and the princely Adventurer, we know not with what intermediate bitterness of soul, when seen in after years by Mr. Swinburne at the Opera in Florence, "was carried away at the end of the performance, being half asleep, and completely intoxicated!" It is possible that the germ of this fatal tendency may have shown itself even in the friendly altercation which is known to have taken place at Kingsburgh, in Skye, between the Prince and Mr. Macdonald, in consequence of the latter refusing to replenish a China bowl, which was eventually broken in the contest.

demarcation injudicious, although the trees themselves seemed in a thriving state. We sought shelter for the night in a bay called Port-Eillan-Oronsay, within the recess of Loch-na-dall. Some time after we had cast anchor, a fine war-steamer, engaged in the surveying service, came in grandly amidst the obscurity of night, her lantern blazing aloft like a meteor, and the sonorous recitative of the sailor who heaved the lead, "Quarter less five," had a wild effect, as the huge black volcanic-looking vessel came roaring round us to her anchor ground.

The morning of the 13th July was clear but cold, and the steamer had rushed northwards by early dawn. There is something worthy of being reflected on in the uses of these travelling distilleries, as the Highlanders at first took them to be. The vast convenience of their introduction along these rocky sea-indented shores can with difficulty be conceived by those who have dwelt all their lives in the vicinity of well kept roads and bridges, and within immediate command of the various modes of cheap and rapid land travelling. But so far as the Western Highlands are concerned, it has been well observed that every thing con-

nected with the invention bears with it a degree of almost romantic wonder, which contrasts strongly with its otherwise mechanical character. " It accomplishes in this district transitions and juxtapositions almost as astonishing as those of an Arabian tale. The Highlander, for instance, who spends his general life amidst the wilds of Cowal, or upon the hills of Appin, can descend in the morning from his lonely home, and setting his foot about breakfast-time on board a steamboat at some neighbouring promontory, suddenly finds himself in company, it may be, with tourists from almost all parts of the earth; he sits at dinner between a Russian and an American; and in the evening, he who slept last night amid the blue mists of Lorn is traversing the gas-lighted streets of Glasgow, or may perhaps have advanced to Edinburgh itself, one of the most enlightened of modern cities. Reversing this wonder, he who has all his life trod the beaten ways of men, and never but in dreams seen that land of hill and cloud whence of yore the blue-bonneted Gael was wont to descend, to sweep folds or change dynasties, can stand in the light of dawn amidst the refined objects of a capital, and when the shades

of night have descended, find himself in the very country of Ossian, with the black lake lying in imperturbable serenity at his feet, and over his head the grey hills that have never been touched by human foot. Steamboats, it may be said, bring the most dissimilar ideas into conjunction, make the rude Gael shake hands with the refined Lowlander, and cause the nineteenth and the first centuries to meet together."* All this is properly expressed and true, although perhaps exception might be taken to the somewhat too antithetical relationship of the rudeness of the Celt to the assumed refinement of the Lowlander,—the truth being that Highland gentlemen, properly so called, stand at least upon a par with those of the plains, while the Highland commonalty are superior to the Lowland boors. It must, moreover, be admitted that the latter sometimes gain more than they give when the hand-shaking process is put in practice. But we fear that this is a digression.

Running eastward into the mainland, we entered Loch Hourn (in the parish of Glenelg), a fine extent of inland waters, guarded on both sides by

* *Picture of Scotland*, p. 496.

bold bare barren mountains, with merely a sprinkling of natural copsewood fringing the courses of the water brooks, whose silvery streams are seen here and there playing at hop-step-and-jump down the rocky ravines. On the left hand side, however, as you enter, there is a good deal of woody covering of a rather richer kind, clothing all those portions of the mountain range which do not present an almost perpendicular face of craggy rock. Then follows on the same side a very lofty mountain, ascending from the loch with a vast regular slope, and becoming greyer and more granitic-looking as it ascends, till at last its hoary head becomes one huge rounded stony cairn, piercing the clear blue sky. And clear for a wonder the sky had now become, in spite of Loch Hourn being regarded as the rainiest place on all the earth. We sailed to the top of the first reach, near which, on a level plain, backed by lofty hills, and sheltered by a grove of ancient timber trees, stands the house of Barrisdale. Here the loch turns off to the left, through a narrow throat obstructed by islands, and the further navigation being difficult, and in our case unnecessary, we put about and returned the way

we came. The whole mountains around Loch Hourn are lofty and picturesque, sweeping down in grand lines towards the water's edge, often green where crags and copse are not prevalent, and covered by multitudinous flocks of sheep, chiefly white-faced or Cheviots, which though worse mutton, are of hardier constitution, and produce more valuable fleeces than the black-faced kind. The summits are for the most part bare and rocky. Several houses, and a sprinkling of Highland hamlets, with a few fishing-boats, are to be seen upon the northern shore, especially Arnisdale, a regular village, with a population (in 1836) of six hundred inhabitants. We met a large flock (above a dozen) of herons, of which the roosting places are probably the lofty trees at the head of the loch already mentioned.

But the most peculiar and magnificent feature of Loch Hourn (especially while sailing outwards) consists in this, that although the two opposing points or headlands, which form the entrance, approach towards each other (the one a barren mountain, the other more fringed and rocky), they yet leave an open space between them sea-

wards, beyond which the landscape is closed by a near low portion of the opposing coast of Skye, beyond which again are perceived the great serrated peaks of the Cuillen mountains, which on the day in question were fortunately free from clouds, and seen distinctly defined against the azure heavens, with all their varied and fantastic outlines. In tacking to and fro while making our way outwards, the view of these extraordinary and unrivalled peaks was ever and anon partially intercepted by the dark projecting headlands of the loch, while they were as often seen rising again like giants over the nearer rocks and woodlands, as gliding across we gained the open waters. But we really fear we may exhaust the reader's patience by what must appear a constant repetition of details: for although, as one star differs from another star in the glory of its brightness, so there are differences in the degrees of grandeur of these more earthly scenes,—yet their general features are often so much alike, that words fail to convey the more special character of each, and so you excusably say among yourselves, "the old gentleman is getting prosy." Yet we cannot help it if

we tell the truth, for day after day we stretched along these rock-bound shores, or entered their more sheltered havens,—

> "And all along the indented coast
> Bespatter'd with the salt-sea foam,
> Where'er a knot of houses lay,
> On headland or on hollow bay,—
> Sure never men like us did roam!"

When we got to the mouth of Loch Hourn our pilot informed us that the state of the tide would not admit of our getting through the Kyle-Rhea (or narrow strait which separates the north-eastern part of Skye from the mainland) till the current should turn in our favour, so by way of occupying the time we took a run southwards along the Knoydart coast as far as the mouth of Loch Nevish.* It seemed to possess many fine wild features, and at a distance, on a level plain, we could discern the romantic residence of Inverie, one of Glengarry's dwellings. This mansion, we understand, is remarkable for having its two prin-

* The name of this loch signifies *Heaven*:—that of Loch Hourn, we are sorry to say, though we know not the reason of the application, means the very reverse.

cipal rooms finished with strong wattle-work from the floor to the roof-tree without ceiling. "The *couples* which support the fabric are of native fir, of great strength and size, also rising from the ground and meeting in massive arches over-head. The floor is of clay and hard sand, the whole finishing being truly Celtic, and in excellent keeping with the tartans which grace its hospitable and accomplished inmates." * It was built by the late Glengarry, perhaps the last of the Highland gentry of the highest class who possessed such strong distinctive features as to differ generically from his compeers in the Lowlands. His personal qualities were probably in consequence both better and worse than they would else have been. One great advantage of his presence in society was that neither man nor beast was allowed to abuse the Highlands with impunity, and although he was sometimes accused of desiring to exercise a somewhat tyrannous sway, we never in social intercourse saw him otherwise than kind and courteous, except when it became his duty to frown on Cockneys, of whom Scotland has her due proportion, native born.†

* *New Statistical Account*, No. ix., p. 135.

† "The family of Glengarry," says Mr. Gregory, "notwith-

On our return towards the Straits we were gratified by the playing of porpoises; which rushed past us with an easy velocity, showing how well they were fitted for the life they had selected. The streaming blaze of light produced behind them by the broken water had a fine effect, and we thought what a rattling reel and powerful gut it would have taken to bring them round. We made our way again towards the Kyles, lying to off Glenelg, waiting the turn of tide. We had here a view of the church and the ruined barracks of Bernera, built as a military station by the

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standing its losses in Ross-shire, continued to prosper in other quarters. Angus, or Æneas, the head of this family, was at the Restoration elevated to the peerage by the title of Lord Macdonell and Aros, for his services to the cause of the Stewarts. This nobleman, presuming on his peerage, endeavoured to get himself recognised as Chief of all the Macdonalds; in which, however, he failed. He left no male issue; and his title, being limited to heirs-male of his body, died with him. The late Alexander Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry, styling himself also of Clanranald, revived the claims of his predecessor to pre-eminence among the Macdonalds, but with no better success,—as that honour, by the general opinion of the Highlanders, belongs to the chief who receives from them the title of *MacDhonuill na'n Eillean*, or Macdonald of the Isles; in other words, to Lord Macdonald."—*Highlands and Isles of Scotland*, p. 417.

Hanoverian Government to overawe the Celts, and although we saw neither the manse nor the churchyard, we thought of the "voice of weeping and of loud lament" which must have been lately uttered when the worthy clergyman was so sorely afflicted by the loss of many bright and youthful hopes. There is something solemn in the character of this opening of Glenelg, with its mountains, wooded hills, and semicircular shore,—the narrow sea almost completely land-locked by the craggy heights which face and conceal the entrance to the receding Kyles.

On approaching the narrows beyond Glenelg we hailed a fisherman, and purchased his whole stock of fine rock-cod, besides a creel full of cockles, for a shilling. We had the curiosity to weigh our bargain, and found we had got exactly thirty-seven pound for the sum mentioned, cockles exclusive. The boatmen craved a dram, which the captain ordered the steward to bring up. C. C. H. though in his own proper person not particularly a tee-totaller, so far as we have seen or heard, went down below and filled a bottle with pure water. The first man got a bumper of it, which he swallowed with becoming gravity (he even

coughed a little), and then handed up the glass, which was refilled for his neighbour. The latter had either a sweeter taste or a sourer temper, for after the first mouthful he put the glass from him very sulkily. The *veritable* was, however, instantly produced,—the first man got his second and more potent bumper, which he took with a good humoured smile, but when it was preferred to his *sterner* neighbour (he who steered the boat), he declined it with an angry wave of his hand, and letting go the rope by which he had been holding on to the Cutter, he pushed off, muttering what sounded like angry imprecations in his mother tongue. Time, tide, and temper, wait for neither mortal man nor spirits, and so he lost his dram. We may here note, that the herring fishery along the shores and lochs of those portions of the mainland which we have last described, has greatly decreased in value during recent years, and is in no way compensated by the additional capture of cod and ling.

As soon as the current served, we entered the Kyle-Rhea. The ferry to Skye crosses its southern opening, and there was a comfortable-looking inn on one side, with fine roads on both, termi-

nating in piers sloping into the water. We admired at this time the beautiful aërial movements of the silvery sea-gulls (attracted by the operations of the cook, employed in gutting cod-fish), which hovered around us, and descended to the surface of the water to pick up the floating *debris*, in a more elegant and graceful manner than altogether comported with their intestinal tastes. The tide now took us very rapidly through the Kyles into Loch Alsh, near the mouth of which, on the mainland side, there is an intermediate spot of ground between the shires of Ross and Inverness, where an Irishman lives in a cottage belonging to no county upon earth. We did not ascertain his politics. Soon after this we passed the Cailliach Stone, a lowly rock of which the actual aspect by no means corresponded in the Secretary's mind with his more lofty imagination of it as expressed in his well known tale of "Allan with the Red Jacket." The historical incident on which it is founded is the following:—Deadly feuds prevailed between the Macdonells of Glengarry and the Mackenzies of Kintail, especially in the time of Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, the thirteenth chief of the name, created Lord Kintail

anno 1608. Angus Macdonell, Glengarry's eldest son, had planned and put in execution a raid upon the Mackenzies, whom he harried, slaying several of the people, and carrying their cattle on board his vessels. Some of the more active, however, having hastened to Eillan-Donan Castle, a noted stronghold of the Mackenzies, were there provided with arms and ammunition, and returning westwards, concealed themselves behind the darkening shadow of the Cailliach Rock. The expected galley of the hostile chief soon made its appearance, considerably in advance of his other vessels, when the Mackenzies, watching their opportunity, discharged their arms, the confusion of which incident caused the galley to run upon the rock. The Kintail men now attacked their adversaries hand to hand, and succeeded in killing or drowning every one of them, including their gallant leader, young Glengarry. A solitary holly on the shore of Skye, not far from the fatal Cailliach, still marks the spot where he was buried.

It was soon after this period that the Clanranald of Glengarry made their incursion to Brae

Ross, where they plundered the lands of Kilchrist and others belonging to the Mackenzies. This foray was signalized by the merciless burning of a whole congregation in the church, while Glengarry's piper marched triumphantly around the building, drowning, if not mocking, the tortured cries of the wretched inmates, by playing that well-known pibroch which under the name of Kilchrist has been known ever since as the family *tune* of the Clanranald of Glengarry. A pretty tune, indeed, to listen to during wine and walnuts in a sultry summer night, though it might have been as well to have played it between sermons, A.D. 1603, rather than during divine service! Nothing more strongly illustrates the cruel and contentious character of those times, than that such an act of dreadful private vengeance should have passed unpunished. "Eventually the disputes between the chiefs of Glengarry and Kintail were amicably settled by an arrangement which gave the Ross-shire lands, so long the subject of dispute, entirely to Mackenzie; and the hard terms to which Glengarry was obliged to submit in this private quarrel, seem to have formed

the only punishment inflicted on this clan for the cold-blooded atrocity displayed in the memorable raid of Kilchrist."*

Passing through and beyond the narrows, we entered Loch Alsh, and cast anchor a mile or two to the westward of Kyle-Akin. On the northern shore was Balmacara House, a plain white comfortable looking building, with a long tail of dependencies of various kinds attached to it. The plantations seemed extensive and thriving, and our view up Loch Alsh towards the dim old Castle of Eillan-Donan, now scarcely discernible in the distance, was impressive. But far richer and more magnificent from the effect of sunset was our western view. The orb of day was setting in amplest glory, illuminating the fiery outlines of Scalpa and Raasay, and falling with such a flood of light on the low and lengthened rocky points which form the entrance to the loch, and especially on that which bears the ruins of Castle Moil, as to give to the whole that rich peculiar Indian red colour which we sometimes see in pictures in-

* Gregory, p. 303.

tended to represent the influence of volcanic fire. So soon as this glory had departed, two of us volunteered with great gallantry to proceed in the long-boat, and cut out our letters from the post-office, which we effected in little more than an hour, without the loss of a single man. It need scarcely be added that we all read our various domestic and other dispatches with delight, and soon after retired to our respective cribs with grateful hearts.

The morning of the 14th of July was dull and showery. During the earlier part of the day we were occupied by writing dispatches for the home department, and with other business, until two o'clock, when we took a boat and a couple of hands and sailed up Loch Alsh in the direction of Eilan-Donan. We passed on the left a pretty bay, with its church and manse, and as we proceeded onwards were much pleased with the view of rocks upon the right intermingled with hanging woods, which became extremely rich and beautiful as we approached the opening of Loch Duich, one of the two lateral branches into which the head of Loch Alsh divides itself, to embrace the district of Kin-

tail.* The leftward branch is called Loch Ling, but Loch Duich is by much the more magnificent from the fine form and great height of the mountains which overhang its head.

The Castle of Eillan-Donan, the ancient stronghold of the Mackenzies of Kintail, stands upon an insular rock at the head of Loch Alsh, just where the two other lochs above-named branch off on either side. It is a bold keep, and faithful in its day, but now rent and riven, with huge tenacious masses of fallen masonry lying among its ruined outworks. On the angle next the land there is a small hexagonal tower, or walled space, filled with water, probably the ancient well. A native informed us that the prevailing tradition of the country bore, that this important reservoir was supplied from a burn on the mainland, by a leaden pipe brought beneath the narrow strait of sea, which did not seem more than fifty yards in breadth. This castle was built in the time of Alexander II. as a defence against the Northmen, and has probably seen a good deal of service in its

* So named from *Ceann-dha-haal*, the "head of the two salt-water lakes."

day. Colin Fitzgerald, an Irish gentleman, was appointed its constable by Alexander III., soon after the battle of Largs. This Colin married the only daughter of Kenneth Matheson, the former constable, and they very properly called their son Kenneth, after his grandpapa. The youth's descendants assumed the name of Mackennich, now commonly pronounced Mackenzie in these degenerate days. The family acquired great possessions in the mainland of Ross-shire at an early period, and subsequently (1610) contrived to oust the Macleods from the island of Lewis. Colin, Lord Kintail, was created Earl of Seaforth in 1623. From the time of Charles I. to the death of Queen Anne, the Mackenzies, next to the Campbells, were perhaps the greatest and most prevailing people in the western Highlands. The Earl of Seaforth's forfeiture in 1715, and that of the Earl of Cromarty in 1745, greatly weakened their power, although they may still be regarded as among the most numerous and wealthy of the Highland clans.* Many of them have now turned their swords into pens as well as pruning-hooks.

* The estates (less by sales, &c.) of both the above named

Among other passages in its history, Eillan-Donan was attacked in the time of James V. (during the absence of the then chief of Kintail, Sir John Mackenzie) by the Macdonalds of Sleat, under Donald Gorme, a descendant, and as some think representative, of John Lord of the Isles, to whom the latter princely title had been refused by the Scottish King. Fifty sail of galleys and smaller boats approached in hostile array, at a time when the whole garrison within its frowning front is said to have consisted merely of the governor, Ghillichrist Macfinlay, *alias* Maccra, and his trusty son Duncan.* The Macdonalds having

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noble families are now held by females,—the Honourable Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie of Seaforth, and the Honourable Mrs. Hay Mackenzie of Cromarty. According to Gregory, George Falconer Mackenzie of Allangrange appears to be heir-male of the Earls of Seaforth, and Sir Alexander Mackenzie of Tarbat (descended from Alexander Mackenzie of Ardloch) bears the same relation to the Earls of Cromarty.

* The Macraes are almost contemporary with the Mackenzies in the Kintail country, the clan being likewise of Irish origin. Their alliance to the latter became so intimate that they are figuratively called in Gaelic "Seaforth's shirt," meaning we presume not that they were subject to be changed like a vesture, but rather that they adhered to that chieftain closer than a brother.

landed with a view to storm the castle, previously called on the governor to surrender. The only answer was an arrow from the battlements, which pierced the foot of Donald Gorme, who hastily plucking out the barbed head, fainted upon the spot. His alarmed adherents being now chiefly concerned about their leader carried him off with all speed to his vessel, and immediately weighed anchor. Donald died in a temporary hut erected on a neighbouring island.

The native with whom we conversed regarding the history of Eillan-Donan, said in reference to its now dismantled state that "it was broken wi' ba's by the Spaniards." We rather think it was demolished in the year 1719, after the battle of Glenshiel (the affair of General Wightman and the Duke of Ormond) by an English ship of war.

On the opposite coast of Letterfearn stand the ruins of an ancient Danish Burgh or Dune, under the title of Castle Gruagach. Two other buildings of the same kind, commonly called Pictish towers for want of a better name, may also be seen in Glenbeg, a divisional valley of Glenelg. The tradition regarding these latter is sufficiently wild and fanciful. They were built by two giants of

such enormous strength and stature, that while one of them placed himself between the mountain from whence the materials were obtained and the intended site of the Dune, he handed the huge stones to his companion, who without further trouble laid them in their courses. We are sorry to think that one of them was subject to fits of bad temper; at least a fine rock of not more than 50 tons is shown as a warning which he once threw at his brother, whom he had detected in the act of carrying off the fire that had been left on his hearth when he went forth to the chase. It seems their names were Akin and Rhea, and when they wished to visit Skye they leaped across the Straits. Hence the reason why the western and southern entrances of the narrows which divide that great island from the mainland, are named respectively Kyle-Akin and Kyle-Rhea.* They both died at last in battle, and their place of sepulture is still pointed out and distinguished by the title of "Imear nam Fear Móra." Some

* Those who dislike the preceding derivations may be amply supplied with others: for example, Kyle-Rhea the *King's* Kyle and Kyle-Akin, more properly *Haken*, in memory of the expedition of Haco, King of Norway, in the year 1263.

accounts, however, bear that poor Rhea was drowned one day, in accordance with the following distich :—

> " Lèum gach Fear air ceann a shleagh,
> Is dhuirich Mac Rhea 'sa chaol."

The tumulus above alluded to, is placed in a little plain near Kyle-Rhea. " Superstition," says the Rev. Mr. Beith, formerly minister of Glenelg, " had long attached sacredness to the spot, and predicted wrath from above on the intruder who with unhallowed hands should force it to reveal its secrets. Several years ago, however, a party of gentlemen connected with the country resolved to brave the danger ; and proceeded, but with the selection of a cloudless day, to put tradition to the test. For a time all went well ; but their task was only half completed, and the wished-for discovery but half made, when the sky became suddenly overcast, and a thunder storm of unusual character compelled them to desist, and to restore matters, so far as might be, to their previous state. They had, however, in their search come upon two sarcophagi formed of large flags, containing the remains of human skeletons, imbedded in the finest sand, of most extraordinary size.

The bones on being exposed to the air, soon crumbled into dust; but an idea of their dimensions is well given by an eye-witness, who states that when the under jaw-bone of one of the skeletons was applied around the lower part of the face of a very large and fat man present, it could so be held without touching him; being at the extreme points nearly twelve inches apart." *

The entrance to Loch Ling or Loung is narrow and crooked, and on its southern bank lies the fishing village of Dornie, composed of slated houses, more neat than picturesque. Here is the ferry for the Parliamentary road between Loch Alsh and Kintail. We did not go up Loch Ling, as it seemed to present no features of particular interest, but we rowed outwards to the south of Eillan-Donan, so as to command the recession of Loch Duich, which is really a magnificent land-locked lake, with fine bold sweeping mountains, wooded on their downward slopes with rich low projecting points, and an enclosing background of high pyramidal mountains at its upper extremity. Although some of the more distant shores were par-

* *New Statistical Account*, No. ix., p. 134.

tially obscured by mist, we could distinguish on the right Rattachan, and Inverinate on the left. We afterwards landed on a low island on the Loch Alsh shore, from which we enjoyed a charming view of all around. There were no herrings hereabouts at this time, although the boats were prosecuting the Cuddy-fishery with some activity.

The small rivers of Kintail were formerly much frequented by grilse and salmon. These, however, have much decreased in latter years, owing as some suppose to the washing and pasturing of sheep along their banks, having rendered the waters more impure. We doubt the efficiency of this cause, though we can suggest no better. Native beasts of prey (such as foxes, badgers, martens, polecats, and weazels) are well known; hares and roe-deer are scarce, and red-deer have diminished in number since the district became so well stocked with sheep, and the rocks re-echoed the barking of the shepherds' curs. Partly from the same cause (and a connected one,—the burning of heath) moor-game are less abundant than in several other Highland districts. In Glenshiel (a portion of which parish forms the south-western boundary of Loch Duich) hares are more numerous, though

rabbits are unknown. Moles are frequent, but notwithstanding the occasional copsewoods, neither squirrels nor hedgehogs have been yet observed. The native trees are chiefly ash and alder, and the western shore of Loch Duich obtains its name from the prevalence of the latter,—*Letterfearn* signifying *the alder side.* Hazel, mountain-ash, and willow also occur in Glenshiel, with birch, bird-cherry, poplar, elm, oak, and holly, in smaller quantities. Little artificial planting has been yet attempted, but the kinds which flourish best, next to the native ash and alder, are larch, elm, and plane.

The herring fishery of these inland waters, although of diminished importance is still the staple trade. The first shoal usually shows itself early in August, when they are said to be lean, with the roe and milt largely developed, and the fish feeding freely on their own and other fry. They are at this period easily caught by hook and line. The next shoal enters towards the end of August, and its constituent hoardes are generally of much finer quality, being fat though large. From this period, according to the Rev. John M'Rae, they both decrease in numbers and diminish in condi-

tion, till the beginning of December, when they gradually disappear. About twenty years ago, six or eight barrels in a night was no uncommon capture for a boat equipped with four barrels of nets (of thirty-six fathoms length by five in depth), but a single barrel is now regarded as a good fishing. The boats carry from two to four men each, are lugger-rigged, with generally about sixteen feet of keel. They are consequently too small to admit of the fishermen following the herrings in their movements from one loch to another. "The nets," says the minister, "are restricted by law to the width of a square inch in the mesh,—an absurd regulation, not warranted by any experience of its utility, and most glaringly partial in its operation; for while it prevents the capture of fish of a serviceable size, the catching of foul fish, *i.e.* of herrings full of milt and roe, is permitted without restriction; and as the great quantities of fish taken on the east coast of Scotland are almost all in this condition, it is no extravagant assertion to say, that more injury is done to the breed of herring by one night's fishing there, than by the capture of all the small herrings that have been killed on the west coast

for a hundred years." It is certainly by no means easy to regulate the laws of nature by an act of Parliament, but we have always maintained that neither a herring, nor any other fish, can be eaten oftener than once in the course of its life. In that case the point to determine is—the most advantageous time (to say nothing of the mode of dressing) at which it should be eaten. At whatever period you catch it, whether old or young, with or without spawn, we hold that if you eat it, either fried or boiled, that particular fish will never spawn again. Now the destroying of a fish in the family way does not more effectually prevent its production of young, than if you had swallowed it when an innocent and inexperienced *mattie.* Nor are herrings necessarily *foul* fish, when full of milt or roe, although they certainly deteriorate in condition for some time preceding the performance of the spawning process. But it is a much clearer point, that if good serviceable middle-aged herrings abound along our shores, and if (as we presume must be admitted) the fry cannot become full-sized without passing through that intermediate state, then it is surely wiser and better not to manure the very fields, as is often done, with these unoffending myriads, but rather to leave them for

a time in their native element to increase in size, and become available as substantial food for man. If any farmer should luxuriate perpetually on legs of lamb in early spring, where will be his hopes of four-year-olds in after times? The gross value of the herring fishery off the shores of Glenshiel was estimated in 1836 (140 barrels at 18s. each) as amounting to £126.

"A beautiful caterpillar," adds Mr. M'Rae, "resembling a green leaf bent into a tube, with its nerves and foot-stalk, was observed two years ago upon the Lombardy poplar." Although this is rather a round-about way of describing an insect, we beg to inform him that the creature in question was the larva of a well-known moth.

Among the reptile tribes in this quarter are frogs, toads, and lizards, but no snakes have been observed in the parish of Glenshiel.*

Having now a free wind we hoisted a small sail, and joined the Cutter in a jiffey. The fishery officer came on board on business in the evening, and reported, *inter alia*, that there had been a tolerable take of herrings off the neighbouring island of Scalpa for several days. Some of the

* *Loc. cit.*, No. xii., p. 188, &c.

boats had six crans, but not in prime condition. There were eight or ten curing sloops waiting for cargoes, several of them without clearances,—an evil which ought to be corrected.

We left our anchorage in Loch Alsh on the morning of the 15th July, passing out of the Straits by Castle Moil and Kyle-Akin. The former seemed little more than a peel tower. Its legendary history bears that it was built by a lady for the purpose of commanding the entrance of the Strait, and compelling vessels to pay duty. Her name was supposed to be Mackinnon, though she is better known by the more familiar appellation of Saucy Mary. She is further alleged, for the surer exaction of her rights, to have stretched an iron chain from shore to shore, and certain hollows in the rocks are still pointed out as manifesting undoubted marks of that ancient fixture. Beyond the castle lies the harbour of Kyle-Akin, with a large substantial pier built by Lord Macdonald and the Parliamentary Commissioners, and there is a small intermediate bay in which vessels may cast anchor, but it seemed an exposed uneasy berth, and our pilot tells us that even within the point he has lain with bows pitching under

water. On a wooded rock above the village stood a nice looking dwelling, the residence of Dr. Mackinnon,—no relation so for as we know of Saucy Mary. We saw at this time three small whales of the kind called Finners, known from afar by their high projecting dorsal fin, which each time they approach the surface protrudes like a huge black scythe above the water, through which it cuts its powerful rapid way, no inappropriate emblem of "*Tempus fugit.*" A steamer came smoking in from Broadford on her way south, and we now parted, much to the regret of all, with C. C. H., whose unfailing cheerfulness, tempered by a stayed and steady consistency of character, and sobriety of conduct, had rendered him not only a pleasant but an improving companion.

We now stood across for the mouth of Loch Carron on the Ross-shire main. Its entrance is wide and open, its upper extremity divided into two,—Loch Carron and Loch Keeshorn. The surrounding shores exhibit rather a bare and barren aspect, but many of the hills are finely formed, those in the distance being somewhat peaked, while lower rocky eminences near the water's edge presented a more picturesque appearance. It

seems from the clergyman's account that the herring-fishery here had greatly declined for ten years preceding 1836, at which period it was regarded as a losing concern in as far as the profits of the few good seasons which occurred were scarcely sufficient to counterbalance the outlay of other years. About the end of last century salmon were so abundant in the river Carron, that an ordinary fisher could kill with the rod sometimes twenty in a day, while now even a skilful angler is satisfied with a single good fish. In regard to herrings, however, we are happy to say they had an excellent take last year of fine conditioned fish, and within these last few days the captures are commencing, and the quality better than those of Scalpa Sound. Off the northern horn of the loch are the rocky inhabited islands of Croulin, and within them a bay called Loch Tuscag, where we saw the wreck of a schooner lost there about six weeks ago.

We had no occasion to ascend Loch Carron, and so bore away for the narrow sound which separates the two islands of Raasay and Scalpa. During this passage we encountered a heavy cross-rolling sea, and some strong and sudden squalls, which

forced us to shake our gaff-top-sail loose, haul down our fore-sail, and up with the main-tack. For a time the Princess Royal was very roughly entreated both by winds and waves, but she conducted herself with the greatest propriety notwithstanding, and soon ran with the speed of an Arab into quiet water under the lee of Raasay's rocky shore. This island lies north and south, with an extent of about sixteen miles, and an average breadth of two. It stretches along with a somewhat uniform height, except the hill of Duncan (*Dun cean*, the fortified head or summit), which rises to an elevation of 1500 feet. Perched on high and sloping steeps, were groups of cottages, and patches of cultivation, hanging rather like pictures of farms than the actual objects, so greatly were they inclined to the sea. At this southern extremity there is a clachan, or small group of cottages, called Balna-Keepan, where the children when they first begin to *toddle* about, are tethered to a stake to prevent their rolling off the country. *Keepan* in Gaelic signifies a stake. It is not that there is a precipice or rock of any kind, but merely because the downward slope of the hill-side is so steep that the uninitiated cannot walk without

stumbling, and those who stumble roll into the sea, unless some funny accident or other should overcome their sense of gravity. This, however, we believe is the best portion of Raasay. There are a good many small scattered farms above the heights along the eastern shore, but the western side we afterwards found to be very barren. Scalpa lay to our left, its form uninteresting, but covered with green pasture. We had previously noticed Pabba, which seemed a fertile little island.

Having run into Scalpa Sound, Loch Ainort opened on us. Outside its mouth were several curing vessels, lying, as we thought, too close upon the fishing-ground; so, in order that we might neither show nor imitate a bad example, we came to anchor at some distance within the Sound. Large shoals of herrings had been ascertained to be in this quarter, and numerous fishing-boats were lying along shore on both sides, their nets drying on the beaches, and little tent-like habitations, made of sails, erected here and there, for the accommodation of those who had arrived from a distance. From some of these ascended diagonally streaming wreaths of pale blue smoke, but ere long, as the evening shadows

fell around us, the fires seemed extinguished, and the various boats were seen shooting out from every creek and bay towards the fishing-grounds. They are not allowed to place their nets either before sunset or after sunrise, lest the shoals should take alarm.

As this was the first fishery of any importance we had yet fallen in with, we felt anxious to witness the proceedings, so retiring to bed soon after twelve, we rose again before two, and taking our small boat, were in the midst of the herring fleet just as they had begun to draw. Several were unsuccessful, some only partially so, while others which we came along-side of, higher up Loch Ainort, were hauling in the treasures of the deep like countless wedges of pure silver. Their drifts were shot across the Loch, some boats having five or six barrels of nets, others as many as eight or nine. A barrel measure extends about a hundred yards, the nets are attached together, the whole forming what is called the *drift*, which being shot in a straight line, is anchored at either end with heavy stones, and supported intermediately by corks and buoys. The breadth of the net is four or five fathoms, and it hangs in the water

perpendicularly, its lower edge being kept down by pieces of lead. It was a curious sight to see the busy brawny-armed boatmen hauling up these great black bundles of meshes, with the brilliant fishes sticking to them by the gills, and forming spots and stripes of silver. The net as it uprose from the deep, might have been almost likened to a portion of the heavens above, so varied was the grouping of its constellations. Sometimes a black extent of pitchy darkness, then a solitary twinkling star, next "shining out by twos and threes," anon a blaze of light, followed by glittering though more scattered gems, a spangle here and there, with dimmer "plæiads" intermingled. Many of these marine celestials were cunning enough, however, to enact a kind of Highland fling with their tails the moment they found themselves drawn upwards, and so succeeded in tumbling into the water. These, we fear, were "lost plæiads." The *take* was not, upon the whole, a great one, but sufficient to show us the usual style and mode of working, one man managing the ground-line, and another that by which the nets are suspended, and so massing the depth together, and bundling the whole inwards over

the gunwale of the boat. In one or two of the nets the herrings were very equally distributed among the higher and lower meshes, but in others, which had been among the least successful, it was only to the latter that any fish were found adhering. We infer from this, either that the shoal in partial spots had taken alarm, and sunk into deeper water, or that particular nets had been suspended too near the surface. Every thing, however, was conducted with great propriety; and although many boats had both to cast and haul in the immediate vicinity of each other, there was no squabbling nor quarrelling among the crews. Possibly the august presence of the Princess Royal may have exercised a benign influence on their sometimes contentious spirits.

Besides the novelty of the scene as a picture of fishing life, there was both beauty and magnificence in the unaccustomed early sunrise. While the ocean waters and the lonely shores yet slumbered in sombre darkness, the rosy light of morning was casting a gorgeous yet solemn lustre over vast masses of mountain summits, and as the sun ascended from his liquid bed, the warm and cheering light was seen descending from crag to crag,

till every little isle and inlet, the sandy bays and silvery crested billows, rejoiced serenely in returning day. Yet were there deep ravines where darkness held a more continuous sway, huge hollows in the old cavernous hills, or grey and ghastly crags, which seeming to uprise upon the mountain sides to hail the coming of the holy light, cast their far shadows across the brightening wilderness. This Loch Ainort, though a deep recess, is more of an open semicircular bay than many we have seen, with less of an enclosed and sinuous character. Its mountains, too, are not of that long continuous connected kind which prevail on Loch Sunart and elsewhere, but are rather great pyramidal masses uniting with each other only at their bases; at least this somewhat insulated and conical character is one of their prevailing attributes, and contributed not a little to the grandeur of effect during the morning twilight, by throwing the lights and shadows into broader and more contrasted masses than would have resulted from continuous ranges. The cause of these diversities, both of form and colour, especially remarkable in contrast with the darker and more "Aiguille de Dru" like aspect of the neigh-

bouring Cuillens, is no doubt to be sought in the difference of their geognostic structure and relations; but it is not our intention in these slight sketches to enter into any of the recondite and euphonious mysteries of trap, hyperstein, columnar basalt, grauwacké, clink-stone, stink-stone, and micaceous schist.

We were indeed environed by a wild, though not a savage scene. The surrounding country was, we believe, Lord Macdonald's deer forest, the latter term in Scotland signifying an elevated district, " rocky, bare, sublime," of which the most hopeless attribute is that of forest scenery. There the red-breast might sing his melancholy dirge-like song, but had the babes in the wood wandered into the centre of a Highland forest, they might have perished in their innocence, without one withered leaf for the pious bird to place upon their early graves. There was, however, something strangely sublime in those gigantic solitary mountains looking down upon the waters of the loch, where all for a time was life and motion. The sun rose over the heights of Scalpa as we returned towards the Cutter, and a more glorious uprising could scarcely be conceived,

—the fishing-boats diverging from the bay in all directions, some gliding freely on, others pulling against the wind with vigorous oar,—close by the eastern point, the tall masts and dark hulls of the curing-vessels, surrounded by the smaller boats discharging their finny spoil, whilst varied groups of men and women were collected on the rocks, the whole intercepting the golden splendour which was now pouring its horizontal flood through the cleft gorge of Scalpa Sound. Here and there a silvery plumaged gull, or creaking tern, hovered around, as if asking a share of what had been so lately drawn from the relentless deep. But we gave them none of ours, as we had only one hundred (for which we paid 2s. 6d.) for ourselves. We reached the Princess Royal before five in the morning, and notwithstanding the splendour of the surrounding scene, as we had been scarcely two hours in bed, we "cast ourselves upon our couch," and slept soundly till half-past eight. Then piping all hands and herrings to breakfast, we made a meal that might have rejoiced the heart even of a general philanthropist,—one of the most petrified pieces of humanity ever met with here below,—his defective character arising

chiefly from the curious conjunction of his never having had either parents or progeny of his own on which to concentre the fires of natural affection.

At an early hour of the forenoon of this same 16th of July, we proceeded on our voyage northwards, passing through Raasay Sound, a lengthened strait which disconnects that island from Skye. The bay and town of Portree (King's Harbour) soon opened upon our left. It derives its name from the circumstance of James V. having anchored and remained there for some time during an aquatic progress through the Isles. It has a good entrance, and the town itself exhibits almost an imposing aspect, with its little crescent of handsome fronted houses, and an hexagonal tower of outlook above a wooded hill. We counted seventeen fishing vessels lying in the harbour. To the right was Raasay House, a good-looking modern mansion, constructed of a fair-coloured free-stone, but apparently in a neglected state, so far as the grass plots, and other portions of the home department are concerned. The island itself is (at least on this the western side) as long a stretch of weather-beaten barrenness,

as any one would desire to witness on a summer's day. There are, however, a few plantations here and there in good condition, and the larch seems to thrive well. What is of more consequence, the Sound is productive of excellent fish of various kinds,—cod, ling, lythe, sethe, whitings, haddocks, flounders, and skate; but the same complaints are made hereabouts, as elsewhere, of the great falling off in the herring-fishery of late years. There is a salmon-curing station at Portree, the fish being shipped in steamers to Glasgow, and from thence occasionally still further south.

If Raasay on the whole is poor and uninteresting, Skye apparently on all its coasts is magnificent. The wind had now fallen, and the weather being beautifully calm and clear, we landed for half an hour a few miles beyond Portree, to visit a splendid cavern in which Prince Charles lay for a time concealed. We thought it the most beautiful piece of richly wrought natural rock work we had ever seen, exquisitely moulded outwardly like a cathedral window, and large and lofty in the interior, though somewhat damp and dripping, except at the far end, where the flooring

rises, and the fretted roof has dried its tears. Perhaps the outside is even more beautiful than the interior. The exuding lime-water which causes the growth of the stalactites by which the interior is adorned, has hardened over the entrance into a vast variety of beautiful and graceful forms of a rich cream colour, intermingled with the lichen-covered rock, and interwreathed with long festoons of ivy leaves of the freshest green. Then there are slender columnar flutings, and elegant depending points, forming Gothic arches by their upward union, and seeming as pure as alabaster when seen in relief, and contrasted with the dark recess within. Elegantly waving ferns, and the broader coltsfolt, the rich though lowly mosses, the adhesive silvery lichens, and various wild-flowers, fill up the many-chambered crevices both of the natural rock and the more fanciful incrustations which stream downwards from the loftier arches, and many of the roots and leaves and ivy stems are themselves incrusted over, and give an elegant floral form to what is otherwise now an indurated stony mass.

This cavern is entered almost from the water by a few steep and rather difficult steps immediately beneath the drooping fret-work, so that the view outwards to those within is chiefly through the little natural arches, and it may easily be conceived that the peeps from these down into the deep and stainless sea, with its millions of then gently rippling waves, and across to Raasay's rocky shore, is such as is not often accorded unto mortal eyes.

After leaving the Prince's cave we continued

our shoreward cruize in the long-boat for a mile or two, in search of a reputed cataract of high pretension, but the only one we came to was a very poor affair, dripping miserably from a dark rock into a marshy meadow, and unequal to a single sneeze of Niagara. So we joined the fair Princess Royal, who with all her bravery on was gliding gently onwards at a mile's distance from the shore. The whole of this day was magnificent: —a calm translucent sea, and yet a balmy sail-compelling breeze, or rather gentle breathing,—a bold precipitous coast,—majestic mountains,—and a sky all cloudless through its azure vault, and beautiful as the pure depth of Juno's eyes.

Towards evening we took our course through the narrow sound which divides the northern extremity of Raasay from the small adjoining isle of Rona, and then turning for a few miles southward, proceeded along the eastern shore of the former island. A few huts were here and there (scarcely) discernible among the crags, while small green patches, varying from the size of an ordinary grave to that of a large dining-room carpet, betrayed at least an attempt at cultivation. Though the Highlanders are rather a cun-

ning race, we fear there was but little chance of their crops being easily "taken in" in such a rainy season. The only object of interest we saw in Raasay was Castle Brochel, which stands in a fine bay upon its eastern shore. The ruins rise from a craggy mass of conglomerate surmounting a steep bank, and a portion of the rock itself shoots up within the ruin so as to have formed a portion of the original defence. The position has been well chosen, being accessible only by a precipitous pathway, winding upwards from the sea, and completely commanded by the battlements. The castle itself is small and dilapidated, but still consists of several storeys, composed of broken masses of masonry, tenaciously adhering to and not easily distinguished from the conglomerate with which they are intermingled. But in early ages it must have been a place of great strength when the almost irresistible engines of modern warfare were unknown. *Query.*—If the fortress of St. Jean d'Acre can be taken in two hours, what time will be required to capture Castle Brochel? We found the people in a state of considerable poverty, their habitations wretched, and themselves dirty and ill-attired. We fear the plum-pudding stone

on which their ancient stronghold stands is the only thing which reminds them even in name of the more ample diet of the southern tribes. Many natives had recently migrated to Prince Edward's Island, and some of those we met with could not speak a word of English. Our conversation with them was carried on chiefly through the universally comprehended medium of the snuff-box.

The evening was soft and balmy as we got again on board the Cutter. We then pursued our course north-eastwards, in the direction of the Ross-shire coast, and keeping at sea all night we came to anchor in Loch Shieldag, towards five in the morning of the 17th of July.

CHAPTER V.

LOCH SHIELDAG—THE APPLECROSS DISTRICT—LOCH TORRIDON—THE GAIRLOCH COUNTRY—THE GAIRLOCH ITSELF—FLOWERDALE—LOCH EWE—POOL-EWE—THE RIVER EWE—LOCH MAREE—MOUTHS OF LOCH GREINORD AND LITTLE LOCH BROOM—LOCH BROOM—ULLAPOOL—VARIOUS ISLANDS—LOCH ENARD AND LOCH INVER—MOUNTAINS OF SUTHERLAND—ASSYNT—ITS NUMEROUS LOCHS—KYLE-SKU—ITS TROUBLESOME NARROWS BELOW KYLE STROME—LOCH DHU AND LOCH CUL—THE COAST OF EDDERACHILLIS—SCOURIE BAY—ISLAND OF HANDA—LOCH LAXFORD—THE RIVER LAXFORD—LOCH STACK—FOREST OF DIRI-MORE—LORD REAY'S COUNTRY.

Loch Shieldag forms as it were the central portion of Loch Torridon, the latter consisting, 1st, of an outer and more exposed bay; 2d, of an intermediate loch, nearly shut up by narrows at either end, and 3d, of a larger and completely land-locked portion, at the head of which is Torridon House. The fishery officer came on board for some hours in the morning. There was an excellent fishing here last year. He found the people one evening commencing operations some-

time before sunset, in contravention of the regulations. He hauled five or six fathoms of one of their nets and found it to contain several crans; but he could not prevent the other boats from proceeding to work; the whole fleet went on shooting their nets, and almost instantaneously thereafter these were all floated up to the surface by the immense power of the live fish in and beneath them. The nets were from twelve and a half to thirteen yards deep, and some drifts of four or five hundred yards contained a hundred and twenty crans. This fishing commenced near Island Garvelin, and then ascended the loch. The chief rendezvous of the curing vessels was at the upper end of Loch Torridon. No fishing had as yet been obtained in the same quarters this season.

The country to our right, and that portion of the Ross-shire coast which we passed last night, constitute the parish of Applecross. Owing to the prevalence of sand-stone the headlands are low and tame compared with most that we have seen. Loch Shieldag itself is a pleasant well-sheltered bay, so far as the water is concerned, but the land presents little else than lumpish and

ragged heaps of barren rock. There was a Government church and manse, and a few houses around them, inshore, and among the inhabitants of these latter the small portions of arable land are lotted off. Trout and a few salmon are found in the stream which flows into the head of Loch Shieldag. An attempt was made some twelve or fifteen years ago to plant with firs the small island of Hieldag under which we lay, but they are still in a very dwarfish condition. Sycamores might perhaps have thriven better. Yet the fishery officer informed us that the whole surrounding country to the south of our position was covered by a forest of firs of great magnitude in his early days, that is, about fifty years gone by. These have almost all been cut down for various purposes, except a few stragglers which we saw here and there. The general aspect of these shores must have been then very different, with wood descending almost to the water's edge. Even now, when carefully scanned by such experienced eyes as those of the illustrator of Price and Gilpin, the *bones* of beauty were discernible, a great gaunt skeleton, deprived, however, of all the finer and more varied lineaments which clothe the bald

simplicity of nature, and constitute the picturesque.

The Gaelic name of the Applecross country, which extends from Shieldag southwards as far as Loch Carron, is *Comaraich*, signifying a place of safety. It was partly occupied in former times by a body of Roman Catholic priests, whose establishment yielded a protecting asylum to such as sought it, either for devotional purposes or after the performance of criminal actions. The more modern name of Applecross is said to have originated from five fruit-trees planted crossways in the garden, by a later proprietor, to commemorate emblematically the sacred character of the Comaraich. There are small salmon fishings at Torridon and Balgie, yielding a rent of from £15 to £20, and the gross produce of the herring fishery has been estimated at £500 per annum.

The upper portion of Loch Torridon opens from the north-eastern side of Loch Shieldag, and is entered through an extremely narrow strait. It then opens into a long and wide expanse, the mountains which surround its head being extremely grand. We did not take the Cutter through the narrows, our object being merely to observe the

general form and attributes of this portion of the loch, so often the resort of vast hordes of herring. After rowing into it sufficiently far to attain this object, we returned to the Princess Royal, and proceeded outwards with both wind and weather fair.

The country to our right was now the Gairloch district. All along shore the land is sloping and flat in outline, and of a barren uninviting aspect, but westwards we could discern our recent neighbours, Raasay and Rona, still overtopped by the mountainous cliffs of Skye, while in the remoter and more northern distance the horizon was clouded by the range of Lewis, the far-extended. We soon found ourselves foaming into Gair Loch, with a freshening breeze.

The entrance to this Gair Loch bears an unpromising character in reference to the picturesque, but the mountains towards its head (the same as those seen from Loch Torridon, but now viewed under a somewhat different aspect) are imposing, and as we ascend considerable variety results from islands and rocky headlands. A bay to the right, with a wooded creek at its extremity, seemed snug and pretty. It is named the Nest, and we

saw people feathering their oars as they entered. It is said to be safe in all weathers, and a far quieter place for birds to settle in than Sumburgh Roost. We observed several large patches of cultivation at some height among the brown heath, all in ridges, and some with a straight and regular line of demarcation, as if they were cottar improvements from the moor, lotted off in accordance with a plan of the laird's. In these comparatively cultivated portions of the hill sides there are large congregations of cottages. Slated houses appeared here and there, and in one place a kirk and manse. The parish, like most others in these parts, is of great extent, and the kirk itself is twenty-eight miles from the eastern boundary, twenty from the northern, and fifteen from the southern, so it may easily be conceived that such of the natives as desire to enjoy their *comaraich*, unobserved by the minister, may do so, as that functionary must of necessity often practice the principle of non-intrusion. Cultivated woods now appeared in various places among the rocky heaps a-head, especially over a point within a leftward nook, on opening which and running upwards, we had a view of Flowerdale (Sir Francis Macken-

zie's), with a bridge and river, embowered amid ancient wood, and extensive plantations rising up among the surrounding rocky heights. The natural situation seemed romantic, and the artificial adornments in good taste.

We then tacked about, and went tripping out of the Gair Loch, with such a fresh breeze from the south that we reckoned on dancing onwards with a fine free wind all the way to Loch Ewe. As soon as we had weathered the island called Longa, we hoisted our square sail, hoping to make a rapid run; but the wind soon became very light, and finally almost died away. A large steamer hove in sight, and passed us at a distance of a couple of miles, making her way southwards. She showed her colours, and we returned the compliment. She seemed the same vessel as that which had come roaring round us a few nights previous, in the harbourage of Eillan-Oronsay. A quiet breath of air filling our full-set sails from time to time, we skirted along the remainder of the Gairloch district, and at last gained the entrance of Loch Ewe.

The opening of this last named loch seemed on the whole somewhat low and barren, with few

features of interest, although some of the rocks present a picturesque cavernous aspect. But the grand amphitheatre of mountains which guard the distant background is bold and diversified, presenting an assemblage of fine forms and varied outlines seldom equalled. Much of the range was indeed composed of parts with which we had already become familiar, as forming the background of the other lochs, but here they are marshalled in a semicircular array of great extent, exhibiting in several places three or four distinct gradations of distance. Towards evening we became becalmed, and a six-oared boat was manned to pull a-head, but all in vain. A large hamlet of blackened huts lay long to the right of our position on some flattish ground, and we could see that no breath was stirring inshore from the still continuous wreath of silvery smoke, which after ascending a few yards above these lowly dwellings, settled over them like a protecting cloud. The mountains themselves were fast fading from our sight amid the evening mists, so we dropped anchor for the night a few miles below Pool-Ewe. We made the remaining distance soon after daylight next morning.

When we came on deck on the 17th of July the weather was calm and delightful, though by no means bright,—the mountains being seen through the softening influence of a silvery haze. We were near the mouth of the river, and close upon Pool-Ewe. The view towards the left curve of the bay was extremely beautiful,—a house with trees, various gradations of lower ground rising backwards, those behind broken and rocky, while in the remoter distance some most picturesque precipitously-sided mountains descended into a mysterious unseen hollow, which we naturally inferred to contain a lake, afterwards ascertained to be Loch Fuir. To the right of this the river Ewe debouched into the sea, behind some lowish land which screened its mouth. On an eminence the nearer portion of the village rose to view, and up a receding vale the kirk and manse, seen over intermingling lines which formed the river's banks. Great massive rocks of gneiss heaved up their iron heads, backed by partly wooded hills of the same description, while far loftier mountains of grand and broken forms after nearly meeting from either side closed up the distant scene. Within these

darkening depths, though to us invisible, lay the far-stretching waters of Loch Maree.

As it was the Sabbath morn we landed about the usual time for the commencement of the English service. On making inquiry, however, we found that there was nothing to be had but Gaelic sermon, so not knowing to what extent this might be for edification, we returned to spend the day becomingly on board the Cutter. The mate, and such of the seamen as were conversant with the vernacular, made their way to church. In the evening we walked along the banks of the Ewe, which has a run of little more than a mile from the nearer end of Loch Maree. This was a favourite station of the late Sir Humphrey Davy, a noted angler in his day, and the river Ewe is one of the most famous salmon streams in Scotland. It contains a great mass of swiftly flowing water, very different from the dead dull currents of the lower portions of the Tweed, and reminding one rather of the hoarse and ceaseless murmurs of the great Norwegian rivers. The angling portion from its mouth upwards is but of limited extent (though inexhaustible resources), being ere long crossed by

a broad diagonal stone-dike, with its wily cruives —deceptive prisons for the finny race. We observed that an opening or Sunday slap was left for the onward progress of intrusionists, but placed in such a way that few could find it.

We followed the Gair Loch road which leads along the southern bank, and soon after diverges to the right among the hills. A lofty rocky range prevailed at some distance on that side, the intervening ground being partly cultivated in the form of small patches of grain and potatoes, partly in the more unsophisticated condition of peat-moss. Among these were visible collections of very wretched-looking hovels,—poor even for Highland huts,—with holes for windows, closed up with sods removeable at pleasure. We were at times in doubt if they were actual dwellings, had we not seen so many well-dressed men and women going out and in. The contrast was indeed remarkable between the attire and general aspect of the people, and the forlorn condition of their habitations. Nothing could be more decent and respectable than the groups of natives, all in their Sunday gear. Most of the women had tidy caps (a few of them extremely smart), with bows of ribbons on

either side, and their hair hanging beneath in well-kept curls, and some had elegantly formed great-coats made of cloth, and neatly fitted to the person, though without the capes so common with the Irish women. Where they contrive to stow away, or how to preserve unsoiled by soot and smoke, these better garments within their dingy cabins, is what we have yet to learn.*

* We find our own superficial impressions of these points confirmed by the more prolonged experience of the minister of Pool-Ewe, in his account of Gairloch parish. "The houses of the people in general have but one outer door, and as they and their cattle go in by that one entrance,—the bipeds to take possession of one end of the house, and the quadrupeds of the other, it cannot be expected that a habitation common to man and beast can be particularly clean. Some of the people are indeed now getting into the way of building byres for their cattle, contiguous to their dwelling-houses; and it is acknowledged, even by the most indolent, that a great improvement is thus effected. It is hoped that the practice may soon become more general. When the young people go to kirk or market, few appear more 'trig and clean;' and a stranger would hardly be persuaded that some of them lived in such miserable hovels. When a girl dresses in her best attire, her very habiliments in some instances would be sufficient to purchase a better dwelling-house than that from which she has just issued."—*New Statistical Account*, No. xii., p. 96. The parish of Gairloch is 40 miles long, 30 broad from the extreme points, and contains an area of about 600 square miles.

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH

Our road ere long led us up a steep ascent, winding among craggy rocks and fallen masses, forming a wild pass, with a kraal of huts, and some better houses, at its base. From the higher portion of this rise, a magnificent view of Loch Maree opened before us, stretching away westwards some eighteen miles or more, with all its infinitely varied mountains, some abrupt and rocky, others wildly wooded, all descending towards the encinctured lake, with a grandeur of effect and scenic range of distance not to be conceived. The foreground is of low and craggy hills, in certain places beautifully fringed with natural wood, then comes the liquid lustre of the lake, contrasted in its smooth expanse with the iron visage of its giant barriers, upraising on either side their splintered peaks or huge unbroken sides, or forming alternate promontories, leading the eye towards far distant islands, the whole shut in by huge enclosing mountains, at that time seen mingling among the clouds in ghost-like dimness. Behind us among the rocks sat a fair shepherdess, singing a psalm tune. In reply to our interrogatories she said she could read English a little, and had plenty of brothers

and sisters, upon which we gave her some religious tracts, with which she seemed highly pleased.

Descending again towards the river, we crossed it at the cruives, and then walked along the other side upwards to Loch Maree. There is on these lower banks a fair sprinkling of natural birch-wood of which the odorous breath was a sweet novelty to wave-tossed mariners. So also was the view of lofty crags and gleaming waters, and distant misty mountains, when seen through the light and graceful foliage of these to us unusual trees: no flapping mainsail, no ponderous boom, knocking your hat off (with your head in it), no dangling ropes hitting you on the nose, or lurch of the sea sending you stern foremost abaft the binnacle, whereever that may be,—but all firm and steadfast on the enduring earth, the only masts in view the silvery stems of drooping birch trees, the only cordage over head their lightly waving leaves. The lower part of Loch Maree is extremely narrow, half lake, half river, and from some low meadow almost marshy land among these birchen brakes, we enjoyed some fine views of the wild barren range of broken cliffs which rise on the

opposing side. An osprey or fishing eagle was coursing sedulously up and down the river, eying its pure waters very keenly, but it attempted no descent on grilse or sea-trout.

We have said that the river Ewe is a noted salmon stream. Vast quantities are caught in its lower reaches by net and cobble, and higher up by the cruives already mentioned. They are immediately boiled, kitted, and sent off to London, and other still more distant foreign markets, and the privilege of angling is usually rented by some party of sporting amateurs. During our visit this right was exercised, we believe, by Mr. St. George Gore. He and his friends had arrived at Flowerdale about a week before, and we made up our minds to request an hour's sport on the ensuing day. It is said that the angling here, as in most Scotch rivers, has of late deteriorated considerably. We know that in the summer of 1834 an English gentleman killed in it a hundred grilse and salmon in the course of a few weeks, and the late Sir Hector Mackenzie is said to have frequently killed twenty in a single day. Exotic plants and shrubs are luxuriant at Flowerdale, in the southern part of the district, and of timber

trees, not indigenous to the country, larch and sweet chestnut thrive extremely well. Returning towards the Cutter, we again passed the huts and cottages, and were surprised to see the number of natives grouped about them, like Indians round their wigwams. We got on board to a late dinner, and afterwards enjoyed the sweet serenity of the summer twilight, the sea as calm and clear as a mirror, and the great mountains in the distance in profound repose.

The morning of Monday the 19th was both wet and fair. It rained hard, but the wind blew in the right direction for taking us out of Loch Ewe, and as none of the expected anglers had come across from Flowerdale, and we did not think of either angling without permission, or waiting the chance of their arrival, we set sail for Loch Broom. Isle Ewe seemed fertile, and in a respectable state of cultivation. As we passed outwards, rounding Udrigal Head, we encountered something of a cross sea, and the wind not only lulled but came a-head, so our progress was more slow than we expected. Although the panoramic view of the more distant mountains was still magnificent, the immediate coast scenery was

comparatively insignificant. Indeed the mere shores have exhibited few features of imposing interest northward of Loch Carron.

Weathering the Ru-Mor, we entered the mouth of Loch Greinord. Here we were joined by a beautiful little gull, which kept our company for several hours, and must have flown with us above twenty miles. It seemed very hungry, and we frequently threw out small pieces of fat, which greatly took its fancy, and beautiful it was to see how keenly it descried the smallest morsel among the foaming billows, and with what an unerring beak it pounced upon them. Even when morsels were thrown out when it was far astern, it never failed to see them as it coursed towards us, following the vessel's wake. We observed that even when going down the wind, it always wheeled round, turning its breast and bill to windward, before fishing any thing from the surface. Loch Greinord is backed by a portion of the great group of mountains which rises and surrounds the heads of all these lochs, and the effect they produce on the general scenery is both influential and far extended. We did not ascend higher than Isle Greinord, and on our way northwards took just a

peep through the mouth of Little Loch Broom, which seemed a long, narrow, sheltered sheet of water, having a beautifully outlined and well-broken mountain upon its left, and some fine sweeping hills to the right hand. Its shores are, generally speaking, wild and barren, and a fine series of cascades and rapids descends on the north-eastern face of Kea-Cloch, one of the highest mountains of the district, situate between that narrow sea and the fresh waters of Loch-na'-Sealg. But at the head of this Loch Broom is a cultivated glen hemmed in by protecting hills, in which stands the mansion-house of Dundonnel, an estate not now regarded as *terra incognita* in the records of the Court of Session.

We then ran westwards between Ru-Handerick and the group called the Summer Islands, and entered Loch Broom More, or the Big Loch Broom, soon trending southwards towards Ullapool. On the left were two conical peaks called Ben Vore, — the background composed of the same mountain group so often noticed. We worked our way between low lumpish rocky masses, and several islands of the same character, and observed here and there on the shores of the

mainland some most extraordinary attempts at cultivation,—not in fields, crofts, or potato patches of the usual form, but in every diversity of shape, however complex or irregular, and often resembling articles of dress, such as stockings, vests, half handkerchiefs, and even (an unlooked-for emblem in a Highland country) breeches. We presume that the wayward winding of the rocky surface was their teacher, or rather task-master, in these fantastic forms. As we advanced beyond Isle-Martin, there was a great sheet of this peculiar kind of cultivation, but more regularly divided by straight walls, indicating different possessions, and having a lengthened street or string of huts running along its centre, the whole squared off upon the upper or moorland side, evidently by a planner of estates. The property we believe is part of Mr. Hay Mackenzie's, and the village has probably been formed for the accommodation of such of the inland people as were required to move shorewards on the formation of the larger farms. As we advanced, Ullapool was seen before us, stretching out on a long extended point into the loch. We soon ran round it, and cast anchor on the inner side.

The district or parish of Loch Broom derives its appellation from a small fresh water lake, more than a dozen miles distant from the sea. Being, like every other place we ever saw or heard of in the Highlands, extremely moist in consequence of its surrounding hills, its Gaelic name is *Loch-a'-Bhraoin*, or the Lake of Showers,—Braon or Braom (the precise orthography being of no greater consequence), signifying a shower or drizzle. The title has descended swimmingly towards the sea, and has eventually been applied by these "Children of the Mist" to the entire district, whether wet or dry. The clergyman's account of its physical aspect is not altogether endearing at first sight. "To a spectator placed on an eminence in the inland part of this parish, the appearance is that of a wide and dreary waste of bleak and barren heath, as if a segment of the great ocean, agitated, and tossed, and tumbled, not by an ordinary storm however violent, but by some frightful convulsion of nature, with here and there a rude and lofty peak of rugged rock towering to the skies, had been suddenly condensed, and formed into a solid shapeless mass of unproductive desert, without one spot of green on which to rest

the eye." This is rather alarming, but we are glad to find that "on descending from the heights, and advancing towards the sea, the ground assumes a very different, and more pleasing aspect. Here, along the shores of the ocean, on the sides of the great arms of the sea by which the parish is intersected, and the rich valleys which extend far among the hills, the eye is refreshed by the sight of fertile fields and populous hamlets, with numerous flocks and herds, and woods, and water-streams." * The parish, it appears, possessed a very powerful preacher in the troublous times of 1745. His proper name was Robertson, although he was usually distinguished by the name of "*Am Ministeir làidir*," or the Strong Minister. While present one day during divine service in the church of Fearn, a Gothic kind of building, covered with immense grey flags in place of slates, the roof came suddenly down upon the congregation. Mr. Robertson remained upright, and making his way to the principal door, perceived that the lintel was giving way at one end; he instantly placed his shoulder beneath it, and stood in that supporting

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xii., p. 73.

position till those who belonged to the movement party made their escape. He then re-entered among the, crumbling ruins, and extricated his clerical friend from beneath the sounding-board of the pulpit, under which he lay ensconced with the addition of a mass of stones and rubbish. Having afterwards gone to London on business connected with the politics of the period, he was introduced to the Duke of Newcastle, who gave him a fair promise of pardon to one Hector Mackenzie, a condemned retainer of the Earl of Cromarty. The Duke on his departing proffered him his hand, which the *Ministeir làidir* squeezed with such energy that his Grace reiterated his promise twice over, and the man was saved. He (the Minister, not of State, but Loch Broom) was once attacked in his own parish by two strong ruffians, to the child of one of whom he had refused baptism, on the score of the parent's unsuitable character and qualifications. Finding him at some distance from the manse, they threateningly renewed their application for the ordinance, which was as resolutely refused, upon which the fellows laid violent hands upon the pastor, swearing they would never let him go till he complied. "A

desperate struggle ensued, and Donald, perceiving that the minister was stronger than himself and his neighbour, drew his dirk, and inflicted a deep wound on Mr. Robertson's right arm, notwithstanding which he beat them both, and sent Donald home again to study his catechism." It happened curiously enough, at an after period, that while crossing the Thames in a boat, Mr. Robertson was assailed by a stentorian voice from one of the hulks in the river,—" O ! a Mhaisteir Seumas, am bheil thu' g'am fhàgails' an so?" Oh ! Mr. James, are you going to leave me here? Recognising instantly the speaker's voice, he answered, " Ah ! a Dhònuil, bheil cuimhn agad air l'a na biodaig?"—Ah ! Donald, do you remember the day of the dirk? This was rather a home thrust, which the despairing convict tried to parry with, " Och a Mhaisteir Seumas, is olc an t-àite cuimhnachan *so*."—Oh ! Mr. James, bad place for remembrance is *this*. And here the conversation ceased, but the minister, in the true spirit of his holy calling, lost no time in employing his influence, which was considerable (he had from the first espoused the Hanoverian cause, and been personally serviceable both to Lord Loudon and

President Forbes, on their retreat from Inverness to the Western Islands, on the return of the then victorious clansmen from the battle of Falkirk), and succeeded in obtaining a pardon for his enemy. The reader will be glad to learn, that after the culprit's return to his native country, he commenced and continued one of the most attached and grateful of his reverend benefactor's parishioners.

> "So Donald Dhu, who till that time
> Had been the wildest of his clan,
> Forsook his crimes, repress'd his folly,
> And after ten months melancholy,
> Became a good and honest man."*

The present seaport or village of Ullapool was commenced under the auspices of the British Fishery Society in the year 1788, and has slowly though not greatly increased since that period, continuing, so far as we can learn, in a somewhat stationary condition in more immediate times. It possesses a Government church and manse, and a number of two storey houses, some

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* Wordsworth and Dr. Ross, in their respective works,—*Peter Bell* and *Statistics of the Parish of Loch Broom*, loc. cit., p. 81.

tiled, others slated, and we observed a respectable looking inn within a grove of trees, near the base of the neck of land. Several extensive store and curing houses, built by the Society above named, still exist, but did not seem called into any active service. Each dwelling-house pays 5s. of feu-duty per annum, and the inhabitants have the use of a considerable supply of common pasture on the adjoining hills, from which in the course of the evening we saw a long continuous herd of cows descending to the village, on entering which each seemed to turn spontaneously into her own habitation. Ullapool also possesses a good quay, with a safe and spacious anchorage, but the commercial prosperity expected for the station has not been realized. The departure of the herrings, which no preventive service had the means to hinder, and an alleged inactivity respecting the cod and lobster fisheries, have no doubt been of disadvantage. It is probably much more difficult to plant people than potatoes, and a village wont necessarily increase and prosper merely because a certain quantity of stone, lime, and timber, has been laid down in the form of houses on a given point of land, which some one may have fondly

deemed an "admirable site." No one in those days ever spoke of universal suffrage,—even the opinion of the majority was not much thought of, —and we fear the herrings were never at all consulted on the subject.

The fishery officer came on board on business in the evening. There were no herrings in the loch at this period, although a slight fishing had been obtained a short time previous. Mr. Methuen had made up about five hundred barrels at Isle-Martin, Rushill, and Loch Inver. There were plenty of these fish, we were elsewhere told, in Loch Broom last year, but there was no sufficient supply of salt and barrels, except in the hands of one individual, who would not part with them in the usual way, but wished to purchase from the fishermen at his own price for cure. The men were so disgusted by this attempt at monopoly, that they left the place, and betook themselves to Loch Torridon. Several of the individuals whom we desired to consult in this and the neighbouring districts, have been summoned to Edinburgh as witnesses in an important salmon fishing cause, about to be settled (or at least tried) by a Jury Court, between Mr. Mackenzie

of Ardross (now Dundonell) and Mr. Davidson of Tulloch.

As the Secretary anticipated being engaged by professional enquiries for at least a portion of the ensuing day, we had ourselves made arrangement for a start by sunrise to try the angling of Loch Auchall, a finely wooded lake among the mountains, some miles behind Ullapool. We calculated on the permission so to do of Mr. Hay Mackenzie of Cormertie, who we were told was residing for a time at his beautiful and retired residence of Rae-Dornoch, at the head of the lake alluded to. But as business was carried through more quickly than was expected, we had no opportunity of putting that plan in execution.

According to Dr. Ross, prodigious shoals of herrings frequently appear off the coast of Loch Broom as early as the month of May, but they pass southwards without so entering the lochs and narrow seas as to be of much essential service. They are not of great benefit sooner than the month of September. "From that time their appearance, though exceedingly irregular, is anxiously looked for till the month of February. Great is the preparation made, and much the expense in-

curred, engrossing even the little all of most of the poor families along the coast to meet and profit by the expected bounty. When the herrings set fairly in, at a proper season, and when they continue for a considerable time within the lochs and bays, the benefit is very great. The herrings of this coast are of the very best kind,—the people are instantly afloat, with every species of seaworthy craft,—numerous crews from all parts of the east and west coasts of Scotland, and even from Ireland, press forward with the utmost eagerness to the field of slaughter,—sloops, schooners, wherries, boats of all sizes, are seen constantly flying on the wings of the wind, from creek to creek, and from loch to loch, according as the varying reports of men, or the noisy flight of birds, or tumbling and spouting of whales and porpoises attract them. Hundreds of boats are seen to start at day-set for the watery field; they silently shoot their nets, lie out at the end of their train all night, and return in the morning full of life and spirit, to sell or cure their cargoes. The scene is extremely animated and interesting. And when there is a successful fishing, it is important in a national as well as in an individual

point of view. For some years back, however, the take has not been great, and much loss has been sustained." We may here state, that in addition to trout and eels, the common inhabitants of all the rivers of Britain, south and north, we still find in this western parish, pike, perch, and minnow,—species which do not at all occur in Sutherland, the district we are next to enter. Ullapool and the northern shores of Loch Broom are in the county of Cromarty, a peculiar shire in its position, consisting as it were of certain *disjecta membra*, scattered here and there over the body of the northern parts of Ross.

20*th July*.—The wind being both fresh and free for a run out of the Loch, we lost no time in setting sail, and soon found by the patent log that we were going nine knots an hour. The advantage of this log is that it gives very accurately the actual distance passed over during any number of hours whatever may be the difference of rate from time to time. It is a conical machine with projecting fins or flappers, which cause it to revolve or spin round like an angler's minnow, its gyrations being all the more numerous in the direct ratio of the vessel's swiftness, and acting

upon an index which points the rate upon a graduated dial. We took the deep though narrow channel between the island of Tanera and the mainland. Observed in Haversay (another island) a fine bay, with a large establishment of curing houses, belonging, we believe, to Mr. Macdonald, but apparently not much in use. Passed on our right the mouth of the sound of Shanderny between Rushill island and the main, and noticed Mr. Methuen's establishment on the latter. Saw also several salmon boats working their nets along the sandy shores, a practice which our captain informs us was unknown in this quarter in his earlier days. We then took the extremely narrow passage between the island Mulligrach and that of Rushill, which seemed to be the great capital of the kingdom of cormorants, so numerous were their sable hordes, sitting with poking necks and outstretched flapping wings, along the rocky ridges. The more clamorous oyster-catcher (*Hæmatopus ostralegus*) was also flying from creek to creek.

The outer coast as far as the Ru-more was low, barren, and uninteresting. We next ran across and partly into the great bight which separates this north-western portion of Cromarty from the

Storr-point of Sutherland, and consists of Loch Enard and Loch Inver. The singular mountain called Suilvhen, or the Sugar-loaf, now became a prominent feature, and further north the finely formed Queenaig raised his sharpened ridge and lofty peak. But in the eastern background the great Benmore, the highest mountain in Sutherland (three thousand two hundred and thirty feet above the sea) was screened by many a fold of murky clouds, and refused to uncover his majestic form.

The parish of Assynt is the first portion of Sutherland which a vessel from the south approaches. It is remarkable, especially throughout its western quarters, for such innumerable lakes, that there is scarcely more land than water on its surface. The great majority are small and insignificant, and of little use either to man or beast. But Loch Assynt, which flows into Loch Inver, is a beautiful lake of about seven miles in length, and one in breadth,—in many places richly fringed with natural brushwood,—the Queenaig mountain towering over the central portion of its northern side,—the huge Benmore uprising from its head, with many a craggy point and gentle bay along its sinuous shore. This lake is a noted

haunt of the great fresh-water trout called *Salmo ferox*, which he who hooks for the first time feels it is a solemn thing to catch a tartar. They vary in their state of manhood from six to five-and-twenty pounds, and one of medium size (say ten or twelve) presents a fine example of the finny race,—a salmon in size, a trout in markings, an autumnal char (almost a setting sun) in the richness of his mantling many-coloured hues. In the southern part of the parish the angler will find Cama or the crooked loch, and lochs Vattie, Faun, Urgil, and Bardan, all excellent angling waters, and the majority inhabited by *Salmo ferox*. There are good trout of the common kind in Loch Haw, a small aquatic expansion close to the road between Loch Bardan and Inch-in-damff, and still better in another above the latter station, high on the misty shoulder of Benmore, called Mallochorie, the culinary characters of which we have elsewhere endeavoured to immortalise.* The name of Assynt is usually regarded as a Gaelic compound, *as agus innte*, signifying *out and in*, and referring to the sea-indented character of its rocky shores.

* In a work called "*The Rod and the Gun*," p. 198.

The parish is about 36 miles in length from Cromalt to the Point of Storr, and 18 in breadth from Inverkirgig to Ardvar. Though the countless lakes of its north-western quarter bestow upon it a somewhat marshy aspect, its surface on the whole is extremely mountainous.

As we proceeded northwards the Suilvhen assumed a singularly narrow and upright form, which varied with the position of the vessel. Several fishing smacks from Stornoway were visible in the offing, dodging about for cod. We made from Ullapool to the Rhu-Storr in four hours. Near the Storr stands a curious detached rock called the Boddach Stack, probably a relation of Macleod's Maidens. It looks very like a man preaching, having good shoulders and brawny arms and legs, the whole gigantic form enveloped in flowing garments, something between the Roman toga and the Presbyterian gown. The head, however, seemed wanting. Perhaps it is not always indispensable. We had fine dry decks and pleasant sunshine during this rapid course, and could see at intervals most of the great Sutherland mountains looming at us in the distance. As we beat inwards towards Kyle-Sku, their grizzly sides and Queenaig's spectral

peak appeared through racking mists, which threw a mysterious Ossianic wildness and uncertainty over the surrounding scene. The immediate shores however were bleak and barren, only moderately high, and partook rather of a somewhat flattened irregular craggy character than of the grandeur of Skye's more precipitous and lofty shores.

Leaving the Island of Oldernay on our right, we passed upwards through a labyrinth of other smaller isles, among which were conspicuous in their rocky barrenness Callaway Beg and More. Our object in seeking to enter the narrow rock-surrounded waters of Kyle-Sku was to satisfy ourselves by ocular inspection of the peculiar characters of two extensive lochs (Glendhu and Glencul) which branch off from its more expanded head. The former is above three miles in length, by one and a half in breadth,—the latter is nearly five miles in length by one in breadth,—and both are remarkable not more for the depth and inclosed character of their inland waters, than for the occasional abundance and excellent quality of their herrings. In illustration of the importance of the fishery in this quarter, we may mention that in the year 1829 the herrings drawn from Loch

Dhu alone were worth £30,000. A fleet of a hundred busses has been seen in it at once. So we proceeded on our way.

Having entered the Kyle, or narrowest portion where the sea-way, though clear and deep, is only a few hundred yards in breadth between the rock-bound margins, we could not help admiring the wild seclusion of the scene by which we were surrounded. The tide was with us as we entered, and we were tacking every minute from shore to shore, working our way towards the darkening glens above, and coming always round with our wonted celerity and precision, when instantaneously the Cutter's course seemed as it were arrested by an unknown eddy or change of tide, and away she went stern foremost towards the out-bulging rocks upon the northern shore. She immediately ran in this way so close upon them that we could have sprung to land from the taffrail. The boat was instantly cut away and strongly manned, but the tow-rope had no effect whatever, as the smaller craft was equally under the control of this unexpected tidal current with the Princess Royal. The bustle on deck was of course great during this alarming crisis. The pilot was as

white as foam, from no personal fear, but the painful weight of professional responsibility, and the captain's countenance bore a look of extreme anxiety, though he was cool and collected. He gave order after order with the rapidity of lightning, and they were as instantaneously obeyed, though all to no effect. As the Cutter's head swung round, when her stern was within an inch of the rocky bank, an attempt was made to get way upon her, so as to carry her out by the course she came, but instead of this hoped-for result, by some other uncontrollable power of the eddy, she immediately started and stood right across for the corresponding rocks on the opposing shore. The mainsail was first hoisted, then lowered, next hoisted again, but she answered not the helm; then jib, foresail, mainsail, were all hauled down, and the sullen, angry plunge of the anchor was heard from the bows, followed by a short harsh run of the chain cable. But such was the force which moved her (whatever it might be), that checked though she was by the anchor, she over-rode her cable, and went twice with her fore-foot against the iron bank. At this moment a Highlander swung himself on board from the

hill-side, by clasping the bowsprit. She then commenced wheeling round, so as to threaten to fall broad-side along the rocky shore. The helm was now put hard down, and seemed for the first time to have some effect, the men hove upon the cable, and so got her nearly her own length from the crags, and as her bow swung round with her bowsprit pointing down channel, the captain ordered the foresail and mainsail to be hoisted, and the anchor being quickly hove, away she shot from this insidious trap, to the great relief of all. We cast anchor again almost immediately in a small circular basin within the island, which occurs on entering the lower reach. This perilous passage in our history, and which requires so many words to record, commenced and concluded in a shorter time than we have taken to tell it. But it was by no means pleasant while it lasted.*

We were glad to ascertain that the vessel had sustained no damage, and soon after we were safely

* We were afterwards informed that a similar accident in the same spot once befell the Swan cutter, at that time in the service of the Fishery Board. Her boom struck upon a crag and was shivered to pieces, though this intervention saved the vessel herself from going against the rocks.

moored, we took one of the boats and rowing a short way up the Kyle landed, and then climbing a rocky height we saw where the great sea-waters still flowed darkly upwards, and terminated in a kind of double branch among the desolate hills,—the leftward or northerly being called Loch Dhu, while the other named Loch Cul, stretched away to the south-eastward. From this selected hill we could also see again the loftier Queenaig, now almost directly south, and exhibiting a double front of spiral rocks, with a hollow bosom encompassed by retiring summits, within the shelter of which we doubt not lay concealed some solitary almost sunless pool,—

> "Where sometimes doth a leaping fish
> Send through the tarn a lonely cheer."

Across the Kyle, and looking northwards we commanded a view of the wild and rocky region of Edderachillis. We afterwards saw the fox hunter, accompanied by a few hounds and terriers, winding his way homewards along a narrow path which leads along the shore. This person is an important and indispensable functionary in an extensive almost unpeopled sheep country, where foxes attain to a great size, and have sharp appetites

and sharper fangs. High premiums are paid in this county for the destruction both of feathered and four-footed vermin.

21*st July*.—A fine morning and a fair wind. Proceeding out of the narrows we ran clear out to the mouth of the great bay, named Loch Assynt in many charts, though unadvisedly we think, seeing that there is another of the same denomination farther up the country made of fresh-water. We then sailed along the coast of Edderachillis. To the right within a great cluster of low but rocky islands lay Badcaal Bay. Next came the Bay of Scourie, where we landed for half an hour to inquire at the village post-office for letters. We found a pretty land-locked natural harbour, and some cultivated ground laid out in fields. The houses of the hamlet lay chiefly on some elevated ground to the north, and eastward over the fields are houses here and there. A poor maniac woman was filling the air with her wild cries, ever and anon singing more solemnly a Gaelic song, in which the word "America" was intermingled. Her friends were conveying her in a cart to Dornoch to place her in restraint. We here met Dr. Gordon, a medical gentleman appointed by the

Sutherland family to benefit the district by his professional services. He informed us that the present Duke remitted no less than £10,000 of arrears to tenants on the death of his mother, the lamented Duchess-Countess. His Grace gave £500 worth of meal to the poor people last year, and £1000 to make comfortable provision for certain intending emigrants. It was part of the doctor's instructions to visit a barque called the "Universe," at that time lying in Laxford Bay for the reception of the natives, and he was commissioned to see that proper medicines of all kinds were shipped along with them.

After rejoining the Princess Royal, we tacked and stood in towards the north-west side of the island of Handa, a picturesque precipitous mass of old red sandstone, bearing on its furrowed front myriads of sea-fowl ranged in lengthened lines, like strings of pearls along its horizontal ledges. We were not near enough to disturb them, but had we gone shorewards and fired one of our guns, the very light of heaven (as some say) would have been darkened above us by their countless wings, and the resounding air filled with their wild though by no means inharmonious voices. Within

its darker depths occur the mysteriously impressed remains of antediluvian fish, and other millerites. This Handa, we are told, is tenanted by twelve families, who though forming a loyal people, have curiously enough combined to establish a sort of sub-Queen of their own, in the person of the oldest widow in the island. Her prerogative is recognised both by the Handy-andies themselves, and their neighbours from the main. These insulated people gain their subsistence partly by fishing, partly by scaling the great rocky precipices in search of sea-fowl and their eggs. They also deal in feathers.

The natives of the Edderachillis coast in general, like those of the neighbouring districts, lead a mingled life of fishing and agriculture. Their only crops are potatoes, oats, and bear. They use the common garden spade, and the more ancient Highland implement called *cas-chrom*, the ground wrought upon being too shallow and stony for the use of the plough, and a horse (not being a hippogriff) would be a vain thing for safety among such craggy heights. Before the late Duke purchased this portion of the "Reay country" carts were unknown, but since the formation of roads and

bridges they have multiplied rapidly, so that there are now about forty of these useful conveyances in possession of the various tenants. Field labour commences with the laying down of the crop about the middle of March, and this part of the operation concludes in May. Their harvest begins in August and terminates in October. Sometime after the conclusion of the sowing season the most enterprising of the people commence the herring fishery,—such as have large sea-worthy boats proceeding round to the coast of Caithness about the latter end of July, and returning early in September. A good deal of occupation is also obtained through the medium of a London lobster fishing company, which employs the natives to trap these crustaceans, afterwards shipped alive in welled smacks to the Thames. It was curious to think as we passed along of the certainty that the unseen tenants of the submarine cavernous foundations of those rocky barriers by which we were environed, would speedily be transported from the wildest region in Britain, and in a few days (after conversion by boiling from dingy looking parsons to splendid guardsmen) grace, as much admired productions, the luxurious tables of the wealthiest

capital in all the earth. This lobster fishery continues from April till October. Mr. Stewart regrets that the cod and ling fisheries are not more attended to, and he is of opinion that little or nothing has been done by the application of either skill or capital towards the advancement of that important branch.*

We now ran up Loch Laxford, which like all the others we have recently entered is full of islands,—the shores everywhere consisting of bare rocky hummocks rather than hills, but covered by lengthened "spots of greenery" wherever the bald gneiss protrudes not its unproductive head above the surface. The opening of the loch contains some intricate passages, but its after navigation is clear though narrow, and the Cutter took the upper anchorage cleverly at a single stretch. This bay is a beautiful one nautically speaking. The shores close inwards at the river's mouth, which is spanned some distance up by a single one-arched bridge, visible between the approaching hills which bound the opening to the rocky strath

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xxx.

through which the Laxford flows.* We took up our position near the emigration barque before mentioned, and a cod-catching vessel which had come up Loch Laxford to obtain supplies of bait. We were at first inclined to indulge in mournful musings on the departure of the poor Highlanders

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* The name of Laxford is now applied to the river which runs from Loch-Stack into the salt-water, as well as to the narrow lengthened bay. It is of Norse origin (*Lax*, a salmon, and *Fiord*, a frith), and was no doubt originally bestowed upon the bay itself, or Fiord, by ancient Scandinavian settlers rejoicing in the abundance of its silvery spoils. The parish in general, according to the author of the *Statistical Account*, "is allowed to be particularly like Norway, affording an unbounded field for contemplation to the admirers of nature, in consequence of its sublime scenery and striking Alpine character." It certainly possesses mountains enough both bold and barren, and far-extending branches of salubrious sea,—but the craggy inlets through which these waters flow possess but little of the character of the deeply cleft precipitous Norwegian gorges,—and (dweller in Edom!) where be your magnificent though gloomy forests,—where your sombre giant pines

> "Hewn on Norwegian hills to be the mast
> Of some tall Ammiral,"

Oh! stony-cinctured Alps of Edderachillis? There is scarcely a tree in all the parish.

from their native homes, and the Secretary, who is rather of a melancholy temperament, was almost lachrymose upon the subject, repeating (what we have elsewhere quoted) some stanzas of a Celtic-Canadian boat song :—

" From the lone shieling of the misty island
Mountains divide us, and the waste of seas,—
Yet still the blood is strong—the heart is Highland,
And we in dreams behold the Hebrides.

* * * *

Come foreign rage—let discord burst in slaughter !
Oh ! then for clansmen true and stern claymore,—
The hearts that would have pour'd their blood like water,
Beat heavily beyond the Atlantic roar."

On going on deck, however, in the evening to take our coffee and cigar, the spell was broken, for loud sounds of merriment came from the vessel's deck, and we could see " braw lads and bonnie lasses " dancing their Highland fling with stamping feet (no light fantastic toe) and snapping fingers, and ever and anon a wild huzza, re-echoed by their misty native hills. The very " Universe" was in a roar.

Meanwhile the scene around presented pictures worthy of regard. The tall masts of the bulky

brig (a roomy vessel of 300 tons) with their complicated yards and rigging, rose high in air,—the hardy weather-beaten smack lay farther up,—our own more elegant and shapely Princess Royal, with light and graceful spars, floated between them like a swan at rest. These were the accessories of the seaward view, the waters themselves all still and tranquil, as if no howling storms had ever urged their dread turmoil of waves along those iron-bound shores. The landward features consisted first of the low and craggy hills which formed the coast on either side, with a more expanded flatter shore south-eastwards, where groups of people were gathering shell-fish,—their long slant shadows intercepting the golden light of a serene sunset. Midway between the mountains and the shore were irregular sloping tracts, perhaps less rich than rocky, and backwards from the lowly hamlets of Badnam Bay, a perceptible feathery fringe of dwarfish birch trees. Above, with something of a stern and unrelenting aspect, as if the sinking of a line-of-battle ship beneath its base need not be cared for, Ben Stack uprose with sharp-edged sloping side and towering peak,—while far-

ther to the left the desolate lines of Arkell and the Diri-More upheaved their ghastly range of shivered fronts.

Having permission (through Mr. Loch's attention to the Secretary) to try the angling wherever we might touch in Sutherland, we went ashore for an hour to revisit a former haunt. We found the salmon-fishers with their nets out across the narrows, between the firth and river, waiting to intercept whatever fish might seek to return outwards with the ebb of tide. We landed and made our way upwards to the bridge, from which we again descended rod in hand, killing in our way back to the Cutter a sufficiency of sea-trout. Laxford, as its name implies, is an excellent station both for grilse and salmon, although the perpetual netting at its mouth, the cruive-dyke at some distance up, and the low state of the water at this particular period, made us by no means sanguine in our hopes of sport. The Duke, we understand, keeps the fishery within his own control, that is, it is worked by people under his employment, the produce being purchased wholesale by Mr. Macdonald of Loch Inver, who seems to engross the

entire stations from Loch Carron round to Big-house, on the Caithness border. An osprey was sailing overhead, keeping the courses of the river, and hovering from time to time above some favour-ite pool. It struck us at the moment that an angler not locally conversant with a river, but fishing it in a hap-hazard sort of way for the first time, might gain some good practical hints by observing the piscatorial gyrations of our feathered friend in question. The fisherman (an old friend of our own, whose acquaintance we first made when accompanying Professor Graham in 1833 in search of simples) informed us that these birds are destructive to an almost incalculable extent, so far as sea-trout are concerned. We know not where they breed in this immediate quarter, but in 1834 we found their eyrie on the top of a high chimney of Calder House (we think they called it), a ruined dwelling formerly destroyed by fire, near the head of Loch Assynt.

22*d July*.—This morning was dull and misty, and Captain Stewart having certain carnivorous negociations to complete regarding the purchase of a couple of sheep for provender before starting

across the Minch to the Island of Lewis, we made arrangement for a few hours angling in Loch Stack.

The river Laxford derives its waters from two great reservoirs which are fed by the mountain streams of the central portion of Edderachillis. These reservoirs are Loch More and Loch Stack, the former five miles long by about one in breadth, lying between Ben Scrivy and Benmore (not of Assynt), the latter from three to four miles in length, with a breadth in its central and widest part of a mile and a half, lying between Ben Stack and the so-called forest of Diri-More. These waters, as well as their tributaries, are all very pure and limpid, flowing for the most part from barren mountain ranges of quartz, felspar, and gneiss, with few or no alluvial depositions. The two lochs are connected by a short and curving stream of a couple of miles in length, not deep enough for a boat to glide from one to the other, but at the same time not too shallow to prevent (as our experience tells us) a couple of sturdy Highlanders from dragging any light craft either up or down its current. The river Laxford flows from Loch Stack with a sinuous course of three

or four miles over a rocky channel, and through an irregular and broken strath of varying breadth, into the sea at the head of Loch Laxford. There is an excellent salmon pool beneath the very span of the bridge, though commencing above it, and continuing with irregular gushing flows some distance down. Other salmon pools occur closer to the sea, and there is a long still reach (requiring a curling air) in front of a cottage a few hundred yards above the bridge. There is also a good stream both for grilse and sea-trout, immediately below the cruives, beyond which, except on a fine Monday morning after a wet Sabbath (during which the slaps are open), there is less chance of a decent fish till you gain the head of Glen Stack, and find the water flowing in longer and more tranquil reaches, especially in one not far from the foot of the loch, which, when we saw it last, was marked by a silvery broken birch tree bending over and beautifying its reflecting surface.

But our object on the occasion we are now recording was chiefly to try the sea-trout, which we had been told were numerous in Loch Stack. As we were rowing ashore from the Cutter, we observed a singular kind of encounter on a small

island in Loch Laxford, between a troop of goats and a flock of sea-gulls. The goats were all as black as pitch, and the old ones were accompanied by some young retainers, which to us looked not much bigger than jackdaws, though as nimble as monkeys. Our notice was first attracted by seeing some of them descend from their rocky ledges, and gamble over a piece of green moist meadow ground. They had not done so, however, for more than a few seconds, before they were attacked most fiercely by a flock of gulls, which dived directly down upon them, and each time they did so the goats made a great spring, as if they found the horny beaks too much for either their fore or hind-quarters. They were in a regular quandary, or what the Germans call a ffunke, and it was curious to observe how the gulls achieved their object, by always keeping the goats between themselves and the rocks, and thus at last driving them upwards from the meadow, where we doubt not lay their "callow young,"—small, soft powder-puffs in woolly garments, which the horny hoof of kidling might have sorely incommoded, but for this brave parental interference.

So the goats were gulled, and the gulls not kidnapped.

On landing, we made our way upwards to the bridge, and then keeping on the north side of the river, we ascended to the cruives. There we crossed the river, and came soon to a marshy expansion of the glen, flanked by wild and picturesque rocks, beset with brushwood. We speedily passed a large fallen rock, not much less than the famous Bowder Stone, at the mouth of Borrodale, and farther on the glen narrowed to a gorge, where the scenery was good in its way, but the walking villanous, requiring a continuous scrambling movement for about a mile over large angular masses of fallen rocks and stones and tangled brushwood, —the latter too hard and pointed to push through, not high enough to creep under, and not sufficiently low to leap across. It was altogether an unhappy medium of communication for any man with little time to spare.* But the glen ere long

* It appeared to us at the moment, that by striking slantingly across the country to the right hand, just before approaching the craggy hill, the abutment of which upon the river causes the troublesome passage above mentioned, the upper reaches of the stream would be more easily and sooner gained. We tried

opened gradually, eventually becoming wide and level, and proceeding rapidly with the river on our left hand, and Ben Stack looming before us through streaming mists, we gained the lower portion of the loch, and were soon up to the knees in that wild and solitary water.

It was two o'clock before we reached the scene of action, as we had started late and were long delayed by following the tortuous windings of the rock-bound river. We found a party of anglers in advance of us, who, with others just departed, had been lashing the loch continuously, and with great success, for several days. Towards its head, and in the higher basin called Loch More, they had killed many score of sea-trout, one of which we saw and handled, and think it must have weighed within an ounce or two of five pounds. But they had done their best to rid the waters of most of these "stout uns," as a tall old gentleman of the party called them. As it was the

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'this method of following the string instead of the bow, on our return, and found it a great saving both of time and temper. After what we have said, no angler who knows how to look at a country in connection with the courses of a river, can fail to find the shorter road referred to.

closing day with this party of Southrons, we speedily got into the boat which they had left, under the guidance of a couple of pleasant young Highlanders, one of them the son of the "Forester," whose situation must in one sense be a sinecure, seeing there are no trees, which saves expense for saws and hatchets.

The afternoon was dull and misty, with occasionally a cold and almost sleety shower (although elsewhere the effulgent summer must have been glorying in her prime), but there was a good rippling breeze upon the water, and now and then the murky veil was uplifted over us, and a pale hesitating sunlight gave occasional glimpses across the lake of the great south-western range of the Reay forest country, with the lofty heights of Meal-Horn and the Sabhal-Mhoir. The term forest in this case, as in that of Ettrick (Oh! unforgotten Shepherd! how many a time and oft have we conversed with thee of trouts, and how as we talked "harmonious numbers" swelled, as if thy memory's

"Increase of appetite
Did grow by what it fed on!")

is applied to a vast extent of Alpine country,

which having never known a tree, showed us no shady Vallumbrosa with its many-coloured countless leaves. We saw its grey and barren sides glittering with misty moisture, and coursed downwards by silvery waterfalls, the rushing voices of which came sometimes on us with an almost startling sound,—then died away in gentle distant murmurs, as the varying breezes rose and fell within the hollows of the eternal hills.

In the course of two or three hours we killed about a score of fine fish, ranging in weight from three-quarters of a pound to two pounds and a half,—almost entirely sea-trout, and seemingly fresh run. The Secretary killed from the shore a loch trout (the young, we thought, of *Salmo ferox*, common in Loch More) of above a couple of pounds; and contrary to expectation it afterwards proved as good a table article as those which had migrated from the salt water. Generally speaking, resident loch-trout are by no means of equal excellence in a culinary point of view with those which have derived advantage from sea-bathing, and even the far-famed inhabitants of Loch Leven are, to our taste, not seldom *wersh*, and low in flavour.

Before departing from the loch, we fell into conversation with one of the strangers, and our brief communion was sufficient to afford an additional proof of what we have often felt before,—we mean the existence everywhere of those strange and unexpected solitary links which as it were connect together by a kindly union the far-scattered members of the human race. Go where you will, o'er mountain, moor, or desolate wilderness, the dreary solitude may last for long, but you come at last upon a man, probably standing bolt upright, and wondering askance as much at sight of you as you at him. You are by no means sure at first whether he is a hungry cannibal or an assiduous member of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and so your introductory address is rather guarded. Yet you don't speak to him five minutes (supposing both he and you are open candid characters) before you find him out to be a *link*,—that is, a person who has known, or seen, or heard of something of interest to yourself or family, and which, standing in that far solitude, you are there informed of for the first time. So it was with the gentleman now in our eye, and lately in Loch Stack. We had been

standing near each other in the mist for some time, and pretty considerably immersed in a still moister element, waving respectively a wand of sixteen feet, and not undelighted with the musical trilling of our own or neighbour's line (particularly the former) as it ever and anon

> "Like Isser rolling rapidly,"

ran out in accordance with the sullen plunge or more impetuous bounding of some broad-tailed sinewy finster, while each of us indulged in silence

> "That stern joy which angler's feel
> In fishes worthy of their reel."

We were advancing towards each other, and so of course fishing in different directions, and as we could not pass rods, and continue casting, without the risk of some entanglement, we stopped by an instinctive though unexpressed understanding when we had approached within a few yards. "Misty evening, sir."—"Very." "How are you off for flies?"—"Pretty well." "Will you give us a look at your book?"—"With great pleasure." So, instead of standing half-way up in water, we both waded shorewards, shook ourselves after the fashion of Newfoundland dogs,

and mutually exhibited our barbed devices. The first we proffered him was a highly esteemed fly, invented by an equally esteemed brother of our own. "Thank you, sir," said the stranger. "I like the fly, both for its own sake and its author's. Professor Wilson, when I was a boy in Ambleside, was the first who ever taught me to cast a line, and so I owe him much." This was link first. It is of no consequence to the world in general to be told that we have (as who has not) a nephew in New Holland. None of his friends in Britain had been assured of his welfare since he left his native country in the Spring. Something led us to mention his departure; when our new acquaintance informed us that our relative had experienced a prosperous and speedy run, at least for a good portion of the voyage, as he had "been so good as dine with me at Rio Janeiro a few weeks ago." The angler had just arrived in Liverpool from South America, been seized with an irresistible desire to renew the pastimes of his youth, and postponing all other matters to a more convenient season, had made his way into the wilds of Edderachillis to kill a heavy weight of fish in Loch Stack, and

inform ourselves of a nephew's arrival in Rio Janeiro,—being probably the only man in Europe who had ever seen him out of Britain. This was link second,—which proves the case.

As usual, we conversed with the men who rowed us regarding the birds, beasts, fishes, and creeping things, of the county. One of them informed us of what we had before read and remembered, that some of the deer in certain districts here have forked tails. Of the cause or particular character of this furcation we can now give no account, as we have not yet been favoured with the "ocular proof." But Sir Robert Gordon, in his well-known history of the Earldom of Sutherland (written in the year 1630), records the fact as follows:—"The halfe of the Diri-more, which lyes toward the north and north-west, doth appertain of late to Macky, by the Erle of Southerland, his gift and disposition. In the Diri-more ther is a hill called Arkill; all the deir that ar bred therein, or hant within the bounds of that hill, have forked taills, thrie inches long, whereby they are easailie known and decerned from all other deir." The following is the same author's

account of other wild animals and birds of the county in his days. "All these forrests and schases are verie profitable for feiding of bestiall, and delectable for hunting. They are full of reid-deir and roes, woulffs, foxes, wyld catts, brocks, skuyrells, whittrets, weasels, otters, martrixes, hares, and fumarts. In these forrests, and in all this province, ther is great store of partridges, pluivers, capercalegs, blackwaks, murefowls, heth-hens, swanes, bewters, turtle-doves, herons, dowes, steares, or stirlings, lair-igigh or knag (which is a foull lyke unto a paroket or parret, which maks place for her nest with her beck in the oak trie), duke, draig, widgeon, teale, wild gouse, ringouse, routs, whaips, shot-whaips, woodcock, larkes, sparrows, snyps, blackbirds, or ossils, meivis, thrushes, and all other kinds of wild-foule and birds, which are to be had in any pairt of this kingdome."

There is nothing like making a stand for one's own county, even in the matter of zoology. "Show me," says the *Doctor*, "a man who has no local affections, and I will show you a great scoundrel." We pass over the "woulffs," which

we rejoice to think have been for some time exterminated,* and (like six and half-a-dozen) whittrets and weasels are probably much the same,—but having bestowed some attention during early life on ornithology, we grieve to confess the superficial nature of our knowledge. We are aware that the princely line of the Scottish "capercalegs" is extinct (we talk not now of the Norwegian parvenus),—we believe bewters are bitterns,—we presume turtle-doves (as distinct from dowes or blue-roks), are wood pigeons, sweet-voiced beloved birds, we don't care to enquire regarding routs, as we never liked them even in youth—but, kind compassionate reader! what are lair-igighs or knags? *We* cannot tell. Can you?

The brace of natives to whom we were indebted for rowing our boat about while angling, had soon after leaving their home in the early morning, observed a large wild cat make a spring at something on the ground. They ran forward and

* A tradition exists in this part of Sutherland that wolves were at one time so numerous that to avoid their ravages in disinterring bodies from their graves, the inhabitants were obliged to have recourse to the Island of Handa as a safer place of sepulture.

scared it from its prey, which they found to be a fine grey-hen in good condition, saving a *mortale vulnus* on the lower portion of the head and neck. It was dead before they could lift it from the ground. They drew the bird from beneath a small crib in the stern of the boat, and begged our acceptance of the same. As they called it a moor-fowl, we inferred either that black-game are infrequent in this part of the country, or that they had little knowledge of grouse.

The district of Edderachillis forms the western portion of what is called Lord Reay's country, (though now the Sutherland property) and derives its designation from the Celtic *Eadar-da-chaolas*, signifying between two inlets of the sea, being of old bounded on the south by the waters of Kyle-Sku, and on the north by those of the Laxford, although in the latter direction it now extends through the forest of Fonavan, and by the base of Ben-Dearg, as far as Sandwood Bay. The eastern range of mountains now forms a chief preserve for deer. "The Reay forest, or *Dirumoir*," says Mr. Stewart, "has had always a place amongst the principal forests in Scotland; a character in this respect it maintained for many

generations, till within the last quarter of a century, when it gradually declined, owing to the introduction of sheep. Upon the expiry of the leases of such part of the forest as had been thus allotted for sheep, the Duke of Sutherland has restored the whole to what it originally was, excluding sheep, and placing the range in charge of foresters solely for the preservation of deer. This not only amply provides for the animal most characteristic of the country, and most conducive to the sportsman's adventures, but also relieves the whole neighbouring sheep-walks of the greater part of the deer that roamed over them, the maintenance of which was a considerable burden. The extent of territory so exclusively laid off for deer cannot be less than 60,000 acres, whereof the half is in this parish, and the rest in Durness, inhabited by some thousands of deer, and inferior as a forest to none in Scotland."*

The breed of sheep in the large farms, according to the same authority, is a pure Cheviot. That in the small tenants' hands is usually a cross between the native black-faced breed and the Che-

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xxx., p. 123.

viot, and has been much improved during recent years. The black cattle are much inferior to those of our south-west Highland districts. Before the stocking of the hills with sheep, the Sutherland ponies or *garrons* were a noted and extremely hardy breed, remarkable likewise for longevity. The present breed of Orkney is said to be in a great measure descended from them. Foxes are numerous, of large size, and very destructive in this district. Reptiles, such as adders, lizards, toads, and frogs, (which disappear in the more northern islands), still occur in Edderachillis. It seldom, we believe, happens that any fatal effect follows the bite of a British serpent, but we are told that some years ago a native of this parish was "stung" by a viper, and the result gave rise to apprehensions of immediate death, but *poultry* were fortunately plenty at the time. "When in the greatest agony, the captain of a strange vessel landed on the coast, who prescribed the following singular cure:—a young chicken to be split or cut up alive, and instantly applied to the stung part. After the same treatment had been repeated by cutting up alive and applying nine chickens without intermission, the patient

was relieved; each chicken which was applied indicating by its swelling that it had absorbed poison. The individual who underwent this treatment recovered, is still alive, and enjoys perfect health."* Not one of the split chickens survived. We recommend the case in all its bearings to the careful consideration of Professor Christison.

The climate of this sea-indented district, in spite of its numerous lofty mountains, is by no means cold. It is, however, very humid,—the summer being neither brilliant nor of long duration, —and although the white garments of winter are never worn continually for any length of time, yet is there many a deep recess,—"That keeps till June-December's snow." In the winter of 1838 an avalanche occurred which destroyed a herd of twelve deer, and such was the force of its descent, that these unfortunate creatures were not only instantly killed, but all their bones were crushed in pieces. Here, as elsewhere along our exposed coasts, the fury of the waves is sometimes unbounded when they first strike against the rocky shores. The vexed spray has been known to as-

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xxx., p. 125.

cend to the height of six hundred feet from the base of the precipitous Handa.

We returned to the Laxford shore by seven in the morning, and found the Captain waiting our arrival. Although we had received letters at Scourie, none of us had seen a newspaper for nearly a month, and who was in or out in reference to either Church or State, was a thing unknown. All, however, was quiet when we reached the shore, no net and coble were in motion, and though the tide was up, the fishermen were off their station. We were too tired to indulge in miscellaneous conversation, and are not much given to interrogate strangers at any time. But a man at the bridge to whom we put an accidental question, instead of answering it directly, informed us that this our day of piscatorial travel was the "general fast." Of such observance we had not been *timeously* advised, but we were then extremely hungry, having taken nothing but the merest trifle since an early hour, and so whether right or wrong, we no sooner got on board the Cutter than we dined. To *unfish* Loch Stack was impossible.

The medical resident appointed by the Duke of

Sutherland, came on board from the emigrant vessel for an hour in the evening. He gave us some information regarding the island of St. Kilda, which we hope to visit ere long, if wind and weather favour. He mentioned among other things that Mr. Macdonald of Loch Inver having on one occasion set a strong salmon net of the bag kind, in the sea not far from the point of Rhu-Storr, he not only caught in it ninety salmon, grilse, and sea-trout, but a whale twenty feet long, a large seal yielding seventeen gallons of oil, and upwards of 200 guillemots and auks, which attracted probably by the glittering of the enclosed fish, had plunged among them, and got entangled in the meshes.

In order to illustrate the Changes induced on HIGHLAND PROPERTY in recent times, we annex the following Tabular View of the PARISH of EDDERACHILLIS, from the NEW STATISTICAL ACCOUNT, No. xxx., p. 131.

	1792.			1839.			INCREASE.			DECREASE.		
	No.	Rate.	Amount.	No.	Rate.	Amount.	No.	Rate.	Amount.	No.	Rate.	Amount.
Population,	1024	..	..	1965	..	..	941	..	..	..	..	..
Real Rent,	..	..	£230 0 0	..	..	£2492 18 4	..	..	£2262 18 4	..	..	..
Black Cattle,	2573	at 60s.	7717 0 0	1155	60s.	3465 0 0	..	..	..	1418	..	£4252 0 0
Sheep,	2629	8s.	1051 12 0	12,900*	21s.	13,545 0 0	10,271	..	12,493 8 0	..	..	..
Goats,	1307	7s.	457 9 0	417	7s.	145 19 0	..	..	..	890	..	311 10 0
Horses,	351	£8.	2820 0 0	112	£9	1008 0 0	..	..	..	239	..	1800 0 0
Potatoes,	not stated		..	About 2900 bar.	3s.	435 0 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
Barley,	..	..	..	285 bolls.	28s.	399 0 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
Oats,	..	..	..	95 do.	22s.	104 10 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hands eng. in Fish.	..	..	..	200	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Large Boats,	..	..	..	24	£30	720 0 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
Small Boats,	..	..	..	89	£7	623 0 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tonnage of Boats,	..	..	..	438 tons.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Herring Nets,	..	..	..	600	50s.	1500 0 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
Herrings Caught,	..	..	..	Early, 350 bar.	10s.	175 0 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
				Latc, 2400 do.†	10s.	1200 0 0						
Lobsters,	..	..	..	9600	3½d.	140 0 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
Salmon and Grilse,	..	..	..	4400	4½d.	408 0 4½	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wool,	375st.	7s.	131 5 0	1554 stones.	17s.	1320 18 0	1179st	..	1189 13 0	..	..	..
						£27,682 5 8½			£15,945 19 4			£6363 10 0
									6363 10 0			
									£9582 9 4§			

* With store-farmers 8650,—with small tenants 1900,—exported annually 2350=12,900.

† Taken on the Caithness coast.

§ Being amount of increase in real rent and live stock since the year 1792.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LEWIS—STORNOWAY—LOCH SHELL—THE SHIANT ISLES—LOCH SEAFORTH—THE EASTERN SIDE OF HARRIS—THE NORTHERN COASTS OF SKYE—QUIRAING—TRODDA—FLADDA-HUNA—RU-HUNISH—DUNTULM CASTLE—LOCH SNIZORT—VATERNISH POINT—DUNVEGAN HEAD—LOCH FOLIART—DUNVEGAN CASTLE.

We left Loch Laxford on the morning of the 23d July, with a fair but very feeble wind, and as we got into the Minch or more open sea, which separates Sutherland from the Long Island, we were met by a heavy swell which seemed to proceed from the North Pole. However, we had a good run across, and made the land a little to the southward of the Butt of Lewis. The coast was low, rocky, and full of wave-worn caverns. We passed Tolsta Head and across Broad Bay, to Tiumpan Head, the northern point of a large peninsular projection called the Airds. The intermediate Bay is unsafe for those unacquainted with the mooring stations, owing to a sunken reef of rocks. Proceeding by Bayble and Chicken

Heads, we entered the Bay of Stornoway, and cast anchor off the capital of the Hebrides. It was curious to listen for the first few minutes to the mingled and multifarious sounds by which we were surrounded :—the grumbling noise produced by beaching the boats in safety up the shingle,—the various human voices, loud and energetic from the entering vessels, more still and peaceful on the settled shore,—while the rural cry of land-rails came wafted to us, mixed with the town-telling and alternate tones of beating carpets. The Prince of Wales (revenue brig), a meet companion for the Princess Royal, was riding at anchor in the Bay.

Stornoway presents a cheerful aspect from the sea, the houses seeming to be commodious, well built, and outwardly as white as snow. The country around, however, was low and inky looking, with no trees and little culture. A hill called Mournack, of a spheroidal form, said to be about 700 feet high, was visible in the northern distance. The shingle on the curving beach, was clean and dry, without that black and repulsive character which the heavy heaving sea-weed so often bestows upon our desert shores. When we first took a

superficial glance around us, the most marked and peculiar feature both in the economy of the people and the landscape of the Bay, consisted in lengthened ranges of what appeared to us to be bathing-machines, with vast washings of towels spread out upon the beach to dry. We were somewhat surprised at this, not being aware that the "far Stornoway," though a burgh as ancient as the time of James VI., was a place of such resort for bathing. On a nearer view, however, we discovered that the supposed machines were neither more nor less than stacks of salted tusk, cod, and ling, and that the towels were the same fish in preparation, spread out upon the beach to dry. This proves the propriety of never judging solely from first impressions, which though always strong, are frequently fallacious.

The mail-packet from Pool-Ewe had come in at an early hour, and our breakfast was refreshed by loaf-bread and letters. We then went ashore for a few hours (on the morning of the 24th) to inspect the dried heaps, and made a calculation that at £13 a ton, the present average price, the supposed bathing-machines and towels along shore were worth above £2000. The fine clean sloping

stony beach, with its airy southern exposure, affords an admirable drying place, and on the previous evening we had observed the people turning the fish from time to time, and before sunset building them up into stacks. The capture and cure of such vast multitudes must be a source of great comfort to the people, the land itself being very barren and unproductive, save of peats and vapour. "The temperature of the atmosphere," says the Rev. John Cameron, "is variable, the climate very rainy, and the air extremely moist, insomuch that when a person walks by the sea-side in a hazy atmosphere, and under a cloudy sky, the saline particles rest like dew on the pile of his coat. The dampness of the air is such, that in rooms wherein fires are not constantly kept, the walls emit a hoary down of a brinish taste, resembling pounded saltpetre, when brushed off. The climate is an enemy to polished iron and to books. Fire-irons rust in the space of twenty-four hours without constant fire; and books are covered with a greyish-yellow mould, unless frequently wiped. Frequent and heavy rains fall at all seasons, especially after the Lammas term, whereby the hopes of the husbandman are often blasted, and the fruit

of his toil and industry in a great measure lost. But such a climate may be naturally expected in an island lying so far north, in latitude 58°, surrounded by the Atlantic on the west and south, and by the Pentland Firth on the north-east. And though there are few high hills on the north-east part of the island to break or attract the clouds, still the extensive and deep tract of moss, many miles in length and breadth, with the combined influence of a hundred fresh-water lakes, continually emitting exhalations, attract the passing clouds as effectually as lofty mountains do in other places."* According to Dr. M'Iver, the diseases to which the natives are most subject are those which proceed from cold and damp, and a large proportion of the lower classes, the males especially, die at a comparatively early age. The newly born are very liable to a disease vulgarly called " the fifth night's sickness," which is *Trismus infantum* or infant lock-jaw. It seldom admits of cure. Fortunately fuel is very abundant in the form of peat, and of excellent quality, being

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xii.

hard and black, and when thoroughly dried giving light and heat almost equal to those of coals.

The population of Stornoway and its immediate precincts is nearly 4000,—a large proportion of the parish. It is supposed that many who would willingly, but cannot migrate to foreign lands, come from the neighbouring districts to Stornoway in search of work, and there settle in connection with the fisheries and other occupations. The fisheries consist chiefly of those of cod, ling, and herring. Some of these branches have much declined from their former prosperity. Between the years 1800 and 1808, a sum was circulated of £70,000. About the year 1833 the calculation was that 120 tons of cod and ling were annually caught and cured in the parish of Stornoway (afterwards shipped for Ireland, the Clyde, &c.) the former selling for £12, the latter for £15 per ton. Herrings have been by no means abundant of late years. They are presumed to exist at some distance along the coast, but the people are said to be unacquainted with the deep sea-fishing, and neither their boats nor nets are fitted for that purpose. In 50 miles of coast 3000 barrels had not

been caught and sent to market throughout the period of five years preceding 1833. We attach little importance to the idea prevalent here that the cutting of the seaware and manufacture of kelp have proved injurious to the herrings. We observed on the evening of our arrival about fifteen cod fishing smacks lying in the Bay from London, all fine smart clipping-looking vessels. They are provided with wells in which during the London season they carry up the fish alive, but at this advanced period of the summer they were following the practice of selling their captures to the fish-curers here for 5s. 6d. a score. The cod catching season extends from October till July.

As we walked along the beach towards the stacks in question, the air became sensibly odoriferous. We found them neatly built, the fish being carefully laid flat, layer above layer, and each kind, whether cod, ling, or grey-lords (as sethe are here called, without reference to the creations ensuing the Reform Bill), being made up in separate stacks, each consisting of about a couple of tons. Previous to curing they are bled, cut open, nicely cleansed, and the back-bone for nearly two-thirds of its length from the head cut

away. They are then immersed for a certain time in large pickling tubs, and finally spread out to dry upon the stony beach, which seemed excellently adapted to the purpose. A gently blowing breeze is of more consequence at first than sunshine,—one fine bright day being of most importance towards the conclusion of the course of cure. The stacks are covered at night, and during wet weather, by canvass. The large fish are less approved of than those of middle size, and the colour when well cured is of a yellowish tinge. The finest cod and ling are taken off the Butt of Lewis, and on the west side of the island. Herrings may be said not now to be taken hereabouts at all. We walked along the beach for some time with great interest, examining the character and condition of the various kinds of fish, and inquiring into the mode of capture and the means of cure.

Flounders of the finest quality are found in Broad Bay, and haddocks are likewise cheap and abundant, selling in spring at one shilling a dozen, and at other seasons for a halfpenny each. The country people make a kind of coarse *finnans* of their fish by smoking them, and filling the orbits

of the eyes with salt, which descending down the spine, forms a pervading and preserving brine. This practice originated formerly when salt was dear, and is now continued by habit in preference to any other. Soles and tusk are frequently taken, —also hake, which, however, is a fish of a much coarser kind. Another fishing of a more peculiar nature likewise occurs here. In clear weather (should such occur) in the month of October, the people repair at night to those portions of the shore where streams debouche into the sea, and shallow fords occur. They take a chain of blankets which they drag against the stream, at the same time beating the waters above so as to frighten the countless congregations of cuddies or young coal-fish (sethe) into this unusual bedding, and so drag and drive the fish upon the sandy beach. In this way in one night, by a couple of hauls of six blankets, twenty-four barrels of cuddies have been captured, so vast are the numbers which come up the little friths and freshlets towards the conclusion of the harvest. Those fishes are both sweet and fat. They are sold fresh at 4d. per peck, and their livers produce an oil which, when the article is scarce, brings above a shilling a pint,

though usually not more than 7d.* At the time of our visit to Stornoway mutton was 4d. per pound, grilse 3d., sea-trout 2d., a large cod or ling 6d., a good middle-sized skate 2d., hens 6d. a piece, and so with other articles in proportion. Fresh butter was scarce and dear, and the charges for washing higher than in Edinburgh. To be sure our linens got the benefit of peat-smoke into the bargain. An excellent house was pointed out to us in the environs of the town, of commodious size, with stabling, byre, and outhouses, a considerable piece of garden-ground, and two cows' grass, an *avenue* graced by several alder trees, a sycamore, and three larches and a half, all in the immediate vicinity both of church and market, and paying of total annual-rent the sum of £25. Let Lewis flourish!

Proceeding on our walk we came to a churchyard, or rather burying-ground, as there is no church in that quarter. It lay quite exposed, without any kind of fence or line of demarcation, the graves marked by rude unlettered stones, and a few frail monuments of *wood*,—possibly regarded

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xii., p. 133.

as a commemorative compliment in a country where there are no trees, and timber can scarcely be obtained for love or money. There are no Parliamentary or turnpike roads in Lewis, but we turned inland by a lane, well enough in its way, which afterwards by a sweep over some moorish land, led us again upon the town by Captain Oliver's. We passed a kraal of wretched looking huts, some of them so small and sad, so resembling decayed portions of mother earth. upheaved by accident, that we did not at first regard them as human dwellings, till we observed a single pane of glass, in one instance, sticking in the thatch. Some were attached together, and thickly built up with sods, in such a way as to look like natural green hummocks, over the tops of which chance had thrown a scanty covering of dirty straw. The interiors were very miserable. Yet the people had a healthy aspect on the whole, and seemed in no way deficient in muscular strength. Black eyes, dark hair, and a somewhat swarthy complexion, were more common than we expected in a country where the Scandinavian blood so long prevailed.*

* "The differences," says Dr. Macculloch, "of the Northman and true Gael are strongly marked, and it is to the infinite

There was cultivation in this quarter to some extent, though of a poor description. At the same time the crops were not bad, and the potatoes promised well. The people themselves can do little in the way of improvement, having probably no means of occasional gain by extra work, and depending for their sustenance on these small croft-angries, and that not unfrequently far fiercer field the sea.

Our visit here, as elsewhere, was too short to admit of our adding much to our knowledge of natural history by actual observation, although we did what we could to look about us, as well as to make inquiries, then and since, in all authentic quarters. The lakes in the Stornoway district,

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gradations between those that the confusion of the Highland form and physiognomy is owing. The pure Northman is tall and stout, with round limbs and inclining to be fat when well fed; his complexion is fair, ruddy when young, and his face full; while his eyes are blue, and his hair sandy or sometimes red. A fine specimen of the northern descent offers a striking contrast to the pure descendant of Celtic stock, bred 'in and in.' Small, slender, and dry, with eyes of jet and a sallow skin, his cheek-bones are acute, his lips thin, and his expression keen and wild; the small head being covered with long shining straight locks of coal-black hair."

though numerous are small and shallow, and the surrounding scenery for the most part such as would almost break an artist's heart. The Creed and Gress are the largest and most rapid rivers. They produce sea-trout and a few salmon. The former flows into Stornoway Bay, southwards of the town, the other into Loch Tua. "Many animals," says the minister, "common in other places are unknown in this parish, viz. frogs, toads, foxes, and partridges. One frog was thrown last summer on the quay, from the hold of a ship which brought potatoes from the mainland, and curiosity brought many to see the reptile stranger." Serpents, however, are not unfrequent on the moors, and when any of these insidious creatures are slain by the shepherds, they chop off and preserve their heads, for the sake of boiling them in water, with which, when their cattle are bit at any future time, they wash the wound. "The Linnæan second class of natural history," observes the reverend ornithologist, "viz. Aves, is complete here. The six orders are found: Accipitres, or the falcon kind; Picæ, sea-pies; Anseres; Grallæ; Gallinæ; and Passeres." Pretty well for an unaccustomed enumeration; but, my good sir,

why *sea*-pies? These, we know from experience, are made of alternate layers of paste, poultry, and pepper, and are therefore called for shortness the three p's by mariners; but the order *Picæ* of Linnæus, we can assure you, on our honour, contains no sea-pies either of that or any other kind, but merely magpies, crows, and certain other land birds. The pies you mean are probably oyster-catchers (*Hæmantopus ostralegus*), which however being shore-birds and waders, belong to the order Grallæ. The true Picæ contain the ominous cruel kind, whose predacious habits you have yourself briefly described as follows:—"I lately saw two ravens rest on a sheep's back while the animal was feeding, pierce a hole above the hind haunch, and pull out the intestines before it fell." The common house sparrow is scarcely known in Lewis. A pair hatched in Stornoway in the year 1833, but we did not observe their descendants in 1841. Starlings are common, and of the more musical species, redbreasts, larks, and thrushes are well known, though the first named is by no means frequent. It is singular that neither of our ordinary swallows (*Hirundo rustica* and *urbica*) are seen in Lewis, the sand-martin, *H. riparia*,

being the only visitant belonging to that genus. The late Lord Seaforth imported partridges, which soon became extinct, but hares introduced at the same period have increased in numbers, though their dimensions are extremely small. The indigenous deer are said to be also small in size, and the island produces neither roes nor rabbits.

Though of late so long upon the waves, we think we have never alluded to that beautiful and frequently observed phenomenon, the phosphorescence of the sea, which is now known to result from various causes, and chiefly from minute marine creatures, which exist in unimaginable millions in the ocean waters.

" Awaked before the rushing prow,
The mimic fires of ocean glow,
Those lightnings of the wave;
Wild sparkles crest the broken tides,
And, flashing round, the vessel's sides
With elvish lustre lave.
While, far behind, their livid light
To the dark billows of the night
A gloomy splendour gave.
It seems as if old ocean shakes
From his dark brow the livid flakes
In envious pageantry,
To match the meteor light that streaks
Grim Hecla's midnight sky."

Mr. Cameron, when describing the waters of Loch Tua, details some interesting and rather remarkable features of the phenomenon in question, which in truth, when exhibited in full effect, is such as might have cheered the woes, had he ever turned his regards seawards, even of the "starry Galileo." The minister observes as follows:—"Its colour is a dark green with a bluish tinge, its depth varies from four to twenty fathoms. Luminous globules appear upon the surface when agitated; the fishermen's oars at night seem of a golden brilliancy; and a flaming stream rushes from the helm of the boat or vessel. In shallow water on the sands of Tong, by the motion of my horse's feet, beautiful golden stars, of the size of half-a-crown, are made to float on the surface for a few seconds; these disappear and are succeeded by others, often to the terror of the animal. It is probable these appearances arise from the decaying particles of fish which float on the surface; and when the water is troubled, the air escaping forms a globule, which emits a phosphorescent light before it bursts."*

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xii, p. 119.

We re-entered Stornoway by what is probably regarded as the main street, as it consisted of two-story houses, many of them excellent, all of them tidy and brightly whitewashed, and the street itself, as were indeed the others, extremely nice and clean. Respectable looking shops were obvious here and there, and no want of inns and other places of refreshment. Turning into another street, we visited the Masons'-hall, in which there is a ball-room and reading-room, the former hung with brass chandeliers, the latter with maps. We also met a dancing-master (whom we detected by his walk), and proceeding onwards returned towards our place of embarkation by a street leading along the harbour, which is quite within the town, very snug, with a soft bottom and a good quay. Towards its upper end where a streamlet enters, there is a distillery erected and for sometime worked by Mr. Stewart Mackenzie, whose residence (or his lady's) of Seaforth-Lodge is partially seen on rising ground upon the opposing side. Near it, and in a little dell descending from it, we observed some thriving trees. The house seemed old-fashioned, with a centre and

pair of wings, and by the water side there was a convenient slip for landing from the harbour.*

We found our boats crew waiting for us within a rocky point, on the extremity of which stand the remnants of an ancient place of strength, consisting now of nothing more than a lumpy frag-

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* We here insert a memorandum from our highly esteemed friend Dr. Neill of Canonmills. It refers in the first place to a meeting of the Caledonian Horticultural Society in the spring of 1842. "We had rather an unexpected communication, and one which may deserve notice in your Tour. There was a letter to Mr. W. M'Nab from a Mr. Norman Howie, Stornoway. This worthy man is the only one who has ever succeeded in cultivating onions in the Lewis; and he has raised this crop for a number of years successively on the same spot of ground. This we cannot do here; for the onions are invariably attacked by a maggot or larva, which delights in them, and invariably ruins the crop. He described his method in a simple perspicuous way. After forming his beds, he places over the surface a layer, two inches thick, of pig-stye manure, and claps it smooth and even with the back of his spade; then he sprinkles the dung with 'a very little earth,' (he does not say how deep, but Mr. M'Nab guessed about half an inch); on this he sows the onion seed, raking it in, and smoothing. With this mode of management he never fails to have a crop, free from grub, on the same spot of ground."

ment of masonry, about twelve feet in height and four in thickness. It is believed to have been built in the days of the Macleods, the ancient Lords of Lewis.

We weighed anchor the moment we got on board, and clearing the mouth of the bay, proceeded southwards along the eastern shores of this great island. Lewis and Harris form one continuous though sea-indented lengthened mass, lying nearly north and south, and extending about eighty miles from the Sound of Bernera to the Butt of Lewis. They belong to different counties, the former to Ross, the latter to Inverness, and the political division is marked by no physical characters, but consists merely in an imaginary line drawn from the head of Loch Resort on the west, to that of Loch Seaforth on the east. Harris itself is nearly cut in two by east and west Tarbets, which leave between them an extremely narrow neck of land. The term *Long Island* is more comprehensive or generic, including North and South Uist, and numerous other islands, and extends southwards as far as Barra Head, or a hundred and twenty miles from the Butt of

Lewis. Numerous fresh water lakes occur on all, and the whole range is so seized upon by sinuous arms of the intruding sea, that notwithstanding many firm unmoving mountains, it is not always easy to distinguish clearly the respective domains of land and water. One example may be mentioned of the extraordinary and persevering windings of the briny tide. Loch Maddy in North Uist is not supposed to cover more than ten square miles, yet its line of coast, including its various islands, creeks, and bays, has been calculated to ramify for nearly three hundred miles.

The entire group comprising the so-called Long Island may be described as destitute of wood. They are chiefly covered by a heathy surface, peat bogs, shallow lakes, and craggy hills of various elevation. But Harris is mountainous in the proper sense of the term, parts of its range rising nearly to the height of 3000 feet, while Swaneval in the south-west of Lewis attains an elevation of 2700 feet. There are also some vast precipitous cliffs on the western shore of Barra, and Barra-head itself presents a lofty and imposing aspect. With a view to illustrate the general character of

these outer Hebrides we shall here avail ourselves of a general sketch by Professor MacGillivray, who long resided in the Island of Harris.

" The climate is subject to great variation. It is, however, generally characterised by its dampness. In every part of the range iron is covered with rust in a few days, and finer articles of wooden furniture, brought from foreign parts, invariably swell and warp. Spring commences about the end of March, when the first shoots of grass make their appearance in sheltered places, and the *Draba verna*, *Ranunculus ficaria*, and *Bellis perennis* unfold their blossoms. It is not until the end of May, however, that in the pasture grounds the green livery of summer has fairly superseded the grey and brown tints of the withered herbage of winter. From the beginning of July to the end of August is the season of summer, and October terminates the autumnal season. During the spring easterly winds prevail, at first interrupted by blasts and gales from other quarters, accompanied by rain or sleet, but ultimately becoming more steady, and accompanied with a comparative dryness of the atmosphere, occasioning the drifting of the sands to a great extent. Summer is some-

times fine, but as frequently wet and boisterous, with southerly and westerly winds. Frequently the wet weather continues with intervals until September, from which period to the middle of October there is generally a continuance of dry weather. After this, westerly gales commence, becoming more boisterous as the season advances. It is perhaps singular, that while in general little thunder is heard in summer, these winter gales should frequently be accompanied by it. Dreadful tempests sometimes happen through the winter, which often unroof the huts of the natives, destroy their boats, and cover the shores with immense heaps of seaweed, shells, and drift timber.

" After a continual gale of westerly winds, the Atlantic rolls in its enormous billows upon the western coasts, dashing them with inconceivable fury upon the headlands, and scouring the sounds and creeks, which from the number of shoals and sunk rocks in them, often exhibit the magnificent spectacle of terrific ranges of breakers extending for miles. Let any one who wishes to have some conception of the sublime, station himself upon a headland of the west coast of Harris during the violence of a winter tempest, and he

will obtain it. The blast howls among the grim and desolate rocks around him. Black clouds are seen advancing from the west in fearful masses, pouring forth torrents of rain and hail. A sudden flash illuminates the gloom, and is followed by the deafening roar of the thunder, which gradually becomes fainter until the roar of the waves upon the shore prevails over it. Meantime, far as the eye can reach, the ocean boils and heaves, presenting one wild extended field of foam, the spray from the summits of the billows sweeping along its surface like drifted snow. No sign of life is to be seen, save when a gull, labouring hard to bear itself up against the blast, hovers overhead or shoots athwart the gloom like a meteor. Long ranges of giant waves rush in succession towards the shores. The thunder of the shock echoes among the crevices and caves, the spray mounts along the face of the cliffs to an astonishing height. The rocks shake to their summits, and the baffled wave rolls back to meet its advancing successor. If one at this season ventures by some slippery path to peep into the haunts of the cormorants and rock-pigeon, he finds them sitting huddled together in melancholy silence. For whole days and nights

they are sometimes doomed to feel the gnawings of hunger, unable to make any way against the storm, and often during the winter they can only make a short daily excursion in quest of a precarious morsel of food. In the meantime, the natives are snugly seated around their blazing peat-fires, amusing themselves with the tales and songs of other years, and enjoying the domestic harmony which no people can enjoy with less interruption than the Hebridean Celts.

"The seaweeds cast ashore by these storms are employed for manure. Sometimes in the winter the shores are seen strewn with logs, staves, and pieces of wrecks. These, however, have hitherto been invariably appropriated by the lairds and factors to themselves, and the poor tenants, although enough of timber comes upon their farms to furnish roofing for their huts, are obliged to make voyages to the Sound of Mull, and various parts of the mainland, for the purpose of obtaining at a high price the wood which they require. These logs are chiefly of fir, pine, and mahogany. Hogsheads of rum, bales of cotton, and bags of coffee are sometimes also cast ashore. Several species of seeds from the West Indies, together

with a few foreign shells, as *Ianthina communis*, and *Spirula Peronii*, are not unfrequent along the shores. Pumice and slags also occur in small quantities.

" Scenes of surpassing beauty, however, present themselves among these islands. What can be more delightful than a midnight walk by moonlight along the lone sea-beach of some secluded isle, the glassy sea sending from its surface a long stream of dancing and dazzling light,—no sound to be heard save the small ripple of the idle wavelet, or the scream of a sea-bird watching the fry that swarms along the shores! In the short nights of summer, the melancholy song of the throstle has scarcely ceased on the hill side when the merry carol of the lark commences, and the plover and snipe sound their shrill pipe. Again, how glorious is the scene which presents itself from the summit of one of the loftier hills when the great ocean is seen glowing with the last splendour of the setting sun, and the lofty isles of St. Kilda rear their giant heads amid the purple blaze on the extreme verge of the horizon."*

* *Edinburgh Journal of Natural and Geographical Science* for 1830.

We shall now resume our route. Leaving behind us the projecting lands which separate Loch Stornoway from Broad Bay, sometimes called Loch Tua, the coast became bolder and finer as we proceeded southwards, and a peep into the inlet among the Birken Isles was picturesque. Loch Dungeon (an ominous appellation, though not so bad as *Hourn*, its other name), with Keebuck-Head forming its southern horn, was fine; and we here met a sloop spanking away for Stornoway with her bowsprit gone. It had been carried away on the preceding day, during a gale of wind. We ran along in a lengthened stretch towards the Shiant Isles, and then tacked and stood in towards the entrance of Loch Shell, in the parish of Lochs, in Lewis. The opening is wide, with the sheltering Isle of Newert in its centre, the headlands bold and cliffy, while the receding distances are finely formed. The night came over and around us with a soft and misty calm, blending the ruggedness of Nature with her subdued and pearly tints, and nothing could be more beautiful, as we glided inwards to our anchor-ground, than the mysterious uncertainty of the rocky hills by which we suddenly became encompassed.

Loch Shell runs into and pervades the centre of that great peninsular portion of the south-east of Lewis called the Forest, on account of its having been devoted by the first Earl of Seaforth to the exclusive maintenance of red-deer. There was formerly a high protecting dyke across the isthmus by which it is joined to the inner portion of the parish, but that strong demarcation can scarcely now be traced, and for many years the so-called forest has been let to tenants for the usual purposes of pasture. Benmore, Ushinish, and other mountains, occur in its southern division, the valleys of which yield sweet pasture; but a great proportion of the other parts of the parish of Lochs (so called on account of its multiplicity of sheets of water, whether salt or fresh), is flat and sterile, producing nothing but the coarsest heath. Loch Shell, like the other inlets of the Lewis shores, is seldom visited by herrings now-a-days.. We ourselves regretted being unable to visit the river Laxay, the fine Scandinavian name of which is music to an angler's ears. It draws its primal sources from Loch Adigo, in the western district of Uig, and after-

wards flows from Loch Trialivall into the marine Loch Erisort, to the northward of the forest country. It is the only river in the parish which produces salmon, although a few, said to be of inferior quality, occur in the Creed, a stream which divides Lochs from Stornoway. It is the opinion of the Rev. Robert Finlayson that the proper season for fishing the Laxay is from November to July, and that those taken during the early part of that season are always the best. The Minister also entertains other and more peculiar notions on certain points of Ichthyology. "I have been induced," he says, "to believe, by the testimony of several respectable people in this island, who have had ample opportunities of knowing, that salmon spawn every second year only. It is perfectly well known here, that while the salmon which spawned are poor and black in the months of November, December, January, February, and March, during these months other salmon come from the sea fat and fresh; and that the winter is the best season for fishing,—not that salmon is taken in greater abundance during that season of the year, but that what is

taken then is much better than what is taken during what is called generally the fishing season."* Mr. Finlayson's facts are fully better than his inferences. The spawning season with these fine fish has an extended range. Such as spawn early return soon to the sea, and run up again river-wards in renewed condition, we shall not say for what purpose, but certainly not to spawn again, until the occurrence of the ensuing autumn. Such as spawn late may choose of course their own time for leaving the salt-water, but they are necessarily in good condition during the early colder months, though later to recover in the spring. Besides these and other intermediate states, there are in every river fine-conditioned fish, which do not seem inclined towards the performance of parental functions, and being thus free from much anxiety and toil, they retain for a length of time, even in the river waters, that excellence of condition by which they were characterised on journeying from the refluent sea. The insular streams of Lewis also are of such short extent (the Laxay itself, the largest in the

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xii. p. 161.

parish, running only three miles), that sea-haunting salmon may amuse themselves by coursing up and down whene'er they please, and we know that the migratory inhabitants of small streams frequently depend upon the winter season as affording a fuller supply of water for those "consolations in travel" which are as indispensable to the fish as the philosopher. Loch Stack, formerly alluded to, is often full of beautiful sea-trout in the month of June, while the Shetland lochs, with their comparatively low mountains, shallow vales, and consequently ill-fed streamlets, scarcely receive a single sea-trout till September. But nothing that we know of supports the belief that salmon, as a general or prevailing characteristic, are distinguished from their congeners by spawning only each alternate year.

The parish of Lochs is characterised by possessing the only copsewood in the island,—and this is merely a small collection of stinted birch-trees, on a point called Swordle. That the now bare and barren Lewis was, however, at one period partly an umbrageous forest country, is evident from the large roots, and occasional pieces of timber which occur in the preserving moisture of the

mosses. Even in the far northern and exposed district of Barvas, where the hardy sinewy heather has enough to do to hold its head, and no tree now dapples the surface of the sterile earth, branches and trunks of fir and oak and birch, with hazel boughs and numerous nuts, are often found embedded far below the storm-swept surface. Has some great physical change come over the constitution of the clime and country? or has fire from heaven scathed its surface, reducing to dust its leafy honours? The tradition of the island on this subject is twofold. Some say that in ancient times the Northmen, with a view to monopolise the trade in timber, set all the woods on fire, when they landed on the Outer Hebrides. Others assert that these invaders, being often surprised by sallies of the natives from their sheltering groves, burned all the trees for the sake of fighting *in aperto loco.*

25*th July.*—We meant to have lain at anchor only for a few hours, but a dead calm prevailed throughout the early morning, and we were unable to make way till the forenoon. The view up Loch Shell was picturesque though barren, and the small irregular patches of cultivation visible

among the rocks, resembled rather what a cock with a little harem of hens might scratch up any fine morning, than a winter's sustenance for human beings. Ploughing is not practised in this parish. One good slated house appeared over a knoll along shore. It was the public house, or inn, frequented occasionally by sea-faring men. The picture around us being now distinctly seen, and deprived of all its twilight mystery, was likewise robbed of half its interest. Not so the Shiant Isles, towards which we now stretched out. This singular group consists of three islands,—Eilan-na-Kily, Garveilan, and Eilan-Wirrey. Though rich and verdant in their pastoral portions, they exhibit (especially Garveilan), a fine cliff-like columnar coast on one side, showing strong indications of that basaltic structure of which Staffa and the Giant's Causeway are the crowning glories. There is a curious perforation, or natural archway beneath a rocky ridge of one of these islands, through which a boat may sail. It seemed to lead inwards to a sheltered bay, for we could see through the opening arch a calm clear light, as if reflected from the surface of "still waters," while our own more

rippling and less distant sea showed rather of a purple darkness. Garveilan, the most conspicuous of the group, is between five and six hundred feet in height. "The main part of the island," says Dr. Macculloch, "is a round hill, very difficult of access, terminating on all sides in columnar rocks of various altitude, and intermixed on the east with grassy slopes, and fragments of fallen columns. To the north it presents a long extended line of columnar cliffs, reaching to a thousand yards or more, and impending with its perpendicular face and broad mass of shadow over the dark deep sea that washes its base. The height of this range varies from 800 to 400 feet, and it thus forms one of the most magnificent colonnades to be found among the Western Islands. But these islands are no where more striking than when viewed at a sufficient distance from the northward; the whole of this lofty range of pillars being distinctly seen rising like a wall from out the sea, varied by the ruder forms of the others which tower above or project beyond them, and contrasted by the wild rocks which skirt the whole group. If this scene has not the variety of Staffa, it exceeds it at least in simpli-

city and grandeur of effect as much as it does in magnitude, but lying beyond the boundary of ordinary travellers, it is still unknown."* We were well pleased that light and adverse airs compelled us to tack so frequently between these islands and the Lewis main, as we had thus more frequent and prolonged opportunities of seeing them from various points of view. On Eilan-na-Kily (the Island of the Cell) are the remains of some ancient habitation, the supposed dwelling of an ascetic monk, or "self-secluded man," possibly a sulky, selfish, egotistical fellow, who could not accommodate himself to the customs of his fellow-creatures. Such beings do very well to write sonnets about, now that they are (as we sincerely trust) all dead and buried, but the reader may depend upon it they were a vile pack, if we may apply the term to those who were too unamiable to be ever seen in congregation. Besides the Shiant Isles, there is a singular range of isolated rocks in their immediate neighbourhood.

A fine schooner passed us here with studding sails set, and running at a great rate before the

* *Highlands and Isles of Scotland.*

wind, with salt from Liverpool. The coast of Lewis became rather loftier as we proceeded southwards, but although it presented some bold points, it is on the whole not only barren, but deficient in those decidedly pronounced characters which constitute fine coast scenery. However, a heavy mist hung on the higher hills, and may have robbed us of some of the better features. A vast and disorderly flock of gulls, of all sorts and sizes, came screaming behind us, in consequence of some fishy interiors which the cook threw overboard. At this time the opening of Loch Brolum presented rather a fine appearance, the backward hills being high and broken. Next came Loch Seaforth, forming the south-eastern shore of Lewis, and intermediate between it and Harris. This is a curved narrow inlet of large extent, through which,—

> By night and day
> The great sea-water finds its way
> Through long, long windings of the hills,—

running upwards for twelve miles till it almost joins the head of Loch Erisort. We did not venture along its wild shores, which are said to present a scene of solitary magnificence unequalled

in the neighbourhood. "About four miles farther up the Loch is a shoal that is impassable by boats at half-tide from its rapidity. Loch Seaforth being environed by high land, and narrow throughout, has a very gloomy aspect. The scenery around it is indeed solitary and seldom frequented by man. The bleat of the sheep which pasture on the surrounding hills, sometimes breaks upon the ear. It is frequented by shipping, but is not a very desirable anchorage, from the narrowness of its entry, and the loftiness of the surrounding land, which causes the wind to sweep the Loch sometimes in sudden gusts."* The conical mountain of Clishorn stands close upon its south-western shore.

Our course now lay for a time along the coast of Harris. This island is characterised, like Lewis, by deeply indented shores, but is distinguished by a central range of loftier and still more barren mountains. It possesses numerous islands, both in the sound of Harris and along its lateral shores. Of these several are inhabited, such as Taransay, Pabbay, Bernera, on the west and

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xii., p. 159.

south, and Sca'pa in the mouth of Loch Tarbet, on the east. The last-named island bears the Light-house of Eilan-Glass.

Our attention was at this time attracted by two magnificent whales, of the largest class, which appeared upon our weather-bow. They did not show high above the surface, but we could make out from the point whence the water was blown up, to the back fin, and from thence along a vast continuous ridge of body onwards to the tail, that they were of enormous length,—probably not less than eighty feet. The blowing was very obvious, from time to time, alike to eye and ear,—the water rising apparently in a pretty close and compact column, and then falling outwards and around, in a sort of sheaf-shaped spray. Although the appearance was certainly as if the water had been spouted up directly from the blow-holes, it might be premature to say that it actually was so, without more frequent and closer inspection, for it is evident that such "windy suspiration of forced breath" as a huge whale might enforce upwards from beneath the surface of the waves, would necessarily carry with it a considerable portion of superincumbent water, and thus produce the ap-

pearance of spouting without the reality. We believe it is the opinion of Dr. Knox, and other competent judges, that nothing more than moist warm air is expired by these huge cetacea, and that this being occasionally condensed into a vaporous exhalation by the colder atmosphere, assumes the aspect of a *jet-d'eau*, though not the reality, seeing that the actual passage of water through the blow-holes is contrary to their natural function, and would endanger the creature's life by risk of suffocation.* Be this as it may, the sight of these two monarchs, probably the king and queen of this district of the mighty deep, was magnificent, and formed a most imposing spec-

* The Secretary's view of this disputed point in the physiological functions of the *blowers* of the whale, sided with the prevailing popular belief. "Water it was that rose into the air, because we saw it falling like the sheafy appearance of a jet-d'eau,—and then, granting it to have been water, it could not have been merely thrown up from the surface of the sea by the animal ejecting his breath before he reached the top, because any such process would produce nothing more than a huge bubbling,—whereas this water went up in a column having a narrow neck below."—Sir THOMAS DICK LAUDER'S MS. *Journal*, p. 67.

tacle. We studied them for a time distinctly through our glasses, and eventually got so close that we began to think of putting the Cutter about, rather than hazard the risk of running on them. They heaved their vast and ponderous bodies slowly onwards, scarcely at all descending beneath the surface, but rather with a rolling motion which brought alternately the different dorsal portions into view; and as the huge continuous masses rose above the waves, we could see the water coursing down their deep leaden-coloured backs, like rills from the side of some dark mountain. The sailors maintained that a shoal of herrings was beneath them, and that they were scooping up a couple of cran-fulls each time they sunk their heads below the surface. One was considerably larger than the other,—probably the male. Conscious of his unequalled strength, he moved about with the most lordly leisure, like some magnificent prime minister,—and possessing at least one indispensable attribute of a great statesman,—no fear of the rabble rout by which he was surrounded. As we approached within little more than a hundred yards, they slowly sank beneath

the surface. We ran down, and crossed the direction of their path, just where we expected them to rise again, but they seemed desirous to avoid our society, for after this they merely showed a back fin at intervals, and we speedily saw and heard their heavy breathing at a considerable distance.

After passing Eilan-Glass the coast became lower, though picturesque from its deep and varied indentations. "The fresh water lakes and rivulets of Harris," says the clergyman, "are so numerous that it is impossible to particularise them. The waters of Lucksta, Scunt, and Obbe, teem with trout and salmon, and afford delightful sport to the angler." Grouse are said to be less plentiful than they used to be, owing to the destructive inroads of "the polecat and other vermin." The existence in this quarter of the polecat, said to be unknown in most of the intermediate islands, is one of the many mysteries which meet the student of the geographical distribution of animals. When kelp was in demand the rental of Harris was said to amount to £7000 per annum. It is now reduced to £3500. The whole property was purchased a few years ago by Lord Dunmore, for

£60,000.* The gross annual value of the fisheries has been estimated as not on an average exceeding £400. Towards evening the weather became extremely misty, and as we were soon enveloped in a dense fog, we stood out from the coast, and lay to for the ensuing night.

The morning of the 26th of July exhibited a strong and steady example of mist passing into rain, through the unhappy medium of a drizzle. Being anxious to complete, however superficially, our survey of the coasts of Skye, we bore south-eastwards as soon as we could cut our way through these dense and murky vapours. On going first on deck the planks were wet, the cordage dripping, the air damp and chill, and the dim columnar cliffs along the shore showed themselves at times like blackened spectres piercing a misty shroud. As soon as we could take "an observation" we found ourselves off Ilan-Tulim, in the Sound of Rasay,—thus taking up our line of exploration near the spot from which we had formerly diverged on leaving Skye for the mainland of Ross-shire. We poked and peeped in vain about this part of

* Sir Thomas Dick Lauder's MS. *Journal*, p. 157.

the coast for a fine cascade described by Dr. Macculloch as existing between Runa-bradda and Fladda, and said to cast itself from the summit of a precipitous cliff of 300 perpendicular feet by a single roar into the sea. It boils and foams below, and being projected some distance outwards, a boat can pass in safety between it and the rock from which it falls, thus placing the tourist in a somewhat unusual predicament. But although we had cliffs in abundance, and sea to spare, not a waterfall was to be seen. However, we found these north-eastern shores of Skye in every way worthy of "a careful perusal." The coast is throughout bold and basaltic, throwing up immense ranges of columns perpendicularly from the sea, while the mountains behind are of the finest forms, strong and steadfast in their prevailing character, but with a singular and varied mixture of wild, almost fantastic, peaks and spires. The air was light, and as usual adverse, so that we were compelled to beat on our return westwards,—a circumstance the less to be regretted, as the mists were now collecting into rolling wreaths, and the wreaths rising upwards into long settled ranges of snowy clouds, with brilliant sunny fields

PORTREE BAY, SKYE.

of intermediate blue. We had thus an ample opportunity to satiate the sight with the many magnificent objects by which we were surrounded, for besides the frowning cliffs so close at hand, we had Rona, Raasay, and the Ross-shire coast behind us, and in advance the far-stretching broken line of Lewis, Harris, and other islands.

The great northern portion of Skye with which we were now engaged includes the parish of Kilmuir, and most of the district or ancient barony of Trotternish. One of the most remarkable sights to be seen within it is a singular scene of rocky seclusion called Quiraing. On this occasion we saw its spiry and peculiar points only from a distance. The mountain in which it is placed is about 1000 feet in height, sloping by a steep declivity towards the west, but presenting north-eastwards a face of rugged precipices, varied by huge uprising columns of basalt, and massy fragments of fluted rock. In other parts large spaces forming concave sections present themselves to view, ribbed by fissures and projecting seams, between which in moist weather (which is seldom wanting) streamlets descend in lengthened silvery streaks. Quiraing itself consists of a verdant platform " of

sufficient extent" (observes the martial spirit of its Highland pastor) "to contain six or seven regiments of soldiers. It is studded all round which massive columns of rock, rising up in lofty peaks, by the intervention of deep chasms, which are for the most part inaccessible." On approaching the great inlet to the platform, the passage is much obstructed by heaps of stones and rubbish, washed down, or fallen during the waste of ages.

"But through the dark, and through the cold,
And through the yawning fissures old,
Let tourist boldly press his way

Right through the quarry;—and behold
A scene of soft and lovely hue!
Where blue and grey, and tender green,
Together make as sweet a scene
As ever human eye did view.

Beneath the clear blue sky he'll see
A little field of meadow ground;
But field or meadow name it not,—
Call it of earth a small green plot,
With rocks encompass'd round."

An isolated pyramidal cliff, called the Needle, stands guard to the right of the entrance. The traveller gains the top of the rugged pass, and is struck with wonder at the scene which opens to

his view. Instead of a dark and narrow cave, he beholds the spacious opening spread before him, with the verdurous platform in its centre, to which by a short descending path he may thread his way. "He now beholds the rocks frowning aloft, and the rugged cliffs ranging themselves in circles around him. Rocky pyramids, like a bulwark, encompass the fairy plain on which he stands. All is felt to be a dreary solitude; yet there is a pleasing beauty in the silent repose. The golden eagle is seen soaring aloft in the blue firmament. A panoramic view of the distant sea and district below is visible only in detached fragments, through the rugged clefts and chasms, between the surrounding pyramids. The rocks which compose these huge columns are so streaked and variegated that the visitor's imagination cannot fail to delineate hundreds of grotesque figures of the wildest description on their surface. The nature of the day on which this interesting place is visited has a great effect upon its appearance. It is so studded and encompassed with columns and pinnacles of all heights, sizes, and figures, that their flickering shadows in a sunshine day have an enchanting effect in all who behold them.

Light and shade are there so uncommonly divided, and so constantly changing positions, that the place in consequence is greatly enhanced in beauty. But should a dense mist envelope the spot, as is frequently the case, the scene is greatly changed. Instead of being lively and enchanting, a night-like gloom falls over it like a shroud of darkness! The thick mist slowly floating through the pyramids and concealing their rugged pinnacles from the view, gives a sombre appearance to the whole. The visitor's imagination will lead him to think that the gloomy pyramids before him bind earth and heaven together. He cannot but admire; yet, at the same time, he is filled with a sort of awe, which causes him to ascribe the marvellous works which lie shrouded before him to the wonderful doings of that Omnipotent Being who created all things!" *

The northern points of Skye are well worthy of a much more prolonged inspection than we had it in our power at this time to bestow upon them. A columnar and precipitous front prevails along the whole of the south-eastern shores of Kilmuir,

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xxxi., p. 239.

as far as the Bay of Altivaig. Loch Staffin, we presume, derives its name (in common with the Island of Staffa), from the lengthened *staff*-like aspect of the rocky ribs by which it is surrounded. To the south-eastward of the latter loch the flœtz rocks are seen both above and below the columnar forms. Single sea-girt rocks raise their dark gigantic shapes in advance of the more solid and unbroken coast; natural arches present themselves from time to time; narrow chasms cut by the descending waters furrow the enduring precipices with deepening lines; and gloomy caverns blackening the bases of the cliffs, open their horrid jaws as if insatiate of the ocean's foam. Of these excavations one is supposed in a modified measure to resemble Staffa, and is called we know not why,—*Uàmh-an-òir*, or the Cave of Gold. Loch Miaghailt, a small sheet of fresh water, makes its way to the sea through a subterranean channel, and near the spot where it debouches from a precipice, a rock is seen so resembling a Highlander in his "garb of old Gaul," that it is known under the name of *Creag na féile*,—the Rock of the Kilt. Many of the headlands are extremely fine, but it is almost as easy to scale

them as to know their names, especially when pronounced by the liquid and accommodating tongues of natives. Of the principal of these projections, the following may be mentioned (*euphoniæ gratia*) on the authority of Mr. Alexander Macgregor:—Rutha-chuirn-leith, Rutha-Bhorniskittaig, Rutha-hunish, Rutha-bheannachain, Rutha-gara-fada, and Rutha-nam-bràithrean. The bays, with the exception of Duntulm, do not afford a very adviseable anchorage.

The great district of Trotternish is supposed by some to derive its name from that of Trodda, a small island adjoining its northern extremity, and *nish*, a point or promontory. We regard this as rather a *filius ante patrem* kind of derivation, and should like to know the meaning of the term *trodda* before we decide upon the probability of the greater having drawn its title from the less. Nish is Scandinavian, and terminates land, just as nez, nasus, nose, terminates the human face, and is applied for the same reason. Hence Hunish, Vaternish, Trotternish, &c. *Ness*, so frequently used in the mainland of Scotland, signifies the same thing. Even the names of hamlets betray, in numerous instances, their northern de-

rivation. Hence Hunglatter, Elishadder, Shulista, Herbrista, Bonnistadt, &c. Yet it is a singular circumstance, that with the exception of these Norse appellations of dwelling-places and other local features, not a trace of the Scandinavian tongue can be otherwise discovered in the vernacular language of the country, which is purely Celtic, in reference to which, as we have no dislike to the remnants of an amiable delusion, we think it right to quote as follows:—"In the district of Steinscholl, a man died about twelve years ago named John Nicolson, or MacCormaic, at the very advanced age of 105. There is one circumstance connected with this old man's history worthy of notice, which is, that he could repeat the most of Ossian's Fingal, Temora, &c. with great fluency and precision. The writer of this heard him say that he committed these beautiful poems to memory, from hearing them repeated when a boy by his grandfather. If this fact be not sufficient to establish the authenticity of these unparalleled poems, it must surely establish the truth that they existed before the time of Macpherson, who attempted to translate them into the English language. The silly allegation by

some, that Ossian's poems were Macpherson's own production is palpably confuted by Mac-Cormaic and others, who could repeat them before Macpherson was born."*

We can say little regarding angling in the northern parts of Skye. The largest lake, that of St. Columba, was partially drained above a hundred years ago, and completely so by Lord Macdonald in 1824.† It has been since converted into arable land, and there is but poor fishing in ploughed fields. The remaining fresh waters are of small size, and contain only the ordinary

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* *New Statistical Account*, No. xxxi., p. 244.

† This drainage was chiefly effected by a main trench leading from the lake to the sea with a length of about three quarters of a mile, 35 feet deep, 114 feet wide at top, and sloping gradually at an angle of 33° 40′ to a width of 9 feet at bottom. During an intermediate endeavour to empty its waters in 1763, an oaken boat of great power of endurance with extremely massive rings at either end, was found imbedded. Before its final draining, this lake was annually visited by large flocks of wild swans, which usually made their appearance on the 25th of October, and remained about five months. They came as usual the first autumn after the emptying of its waters, but no sooner witnessed the destruction of their former favourite haunt, than they hovered over it for a time with melancholy cries, and then disappeared.

variety of black and yellow loch trouts. Salmon are frequent along the coast, but the only stream in this quarter which they ascend to spawn is that which flows into the bay of Altivaig. They usually enter with the first floods in August, and return seawards about Michaelmas. A salmon-fishery has been carried on with some success for several years. It is rented (we believe with Lord Macdonald's other fisheries of the same kind in Skye) by Mr. Wilson of Berwick-upon-Tweed. Bag-nets alone are used; the fish, of which the quality is said to be excellent, are pickled, and transmitted to the London market. The herring-fishery here is now of no value. Time was when countless hordes of that fish were spread over every creek and bay around the island, forming a lucrative source of commerce, and an abundant easily-obtained supply of food for all classes. In certain seasons gurnards are extremely abundant. The skate is common, and is fortunately prized by the natives, though almost (we know not why) rejected in some other quarters of our Highlands. The lythe (*Merlangus pollachius*) is much esteemed, and its congener the sethe (*M. carbonarius*), though drier and less delicate, is per-

haps of all fishes the most useful to the people, as it supplies them with oil for light. In relation to this particular use, the best season for its capture is the autumn, when from eighty to one hundred well grown fish will yield an imperial gallon of oil, preferable for burning to the train oil of the cetaceous order.* Besides these fishes, cod, ling, thornback, turbot, mackerel, whiting, hake, conger eel, &c. occur in more or less abundance, although the exposed and rocky character of the coast, and the inefficient nature of the boats and fishing gear, render these treasures of the deep less available than elsewhere. Haddocks are now rare, although about fifty years ago they were the most abundant of all fishes.

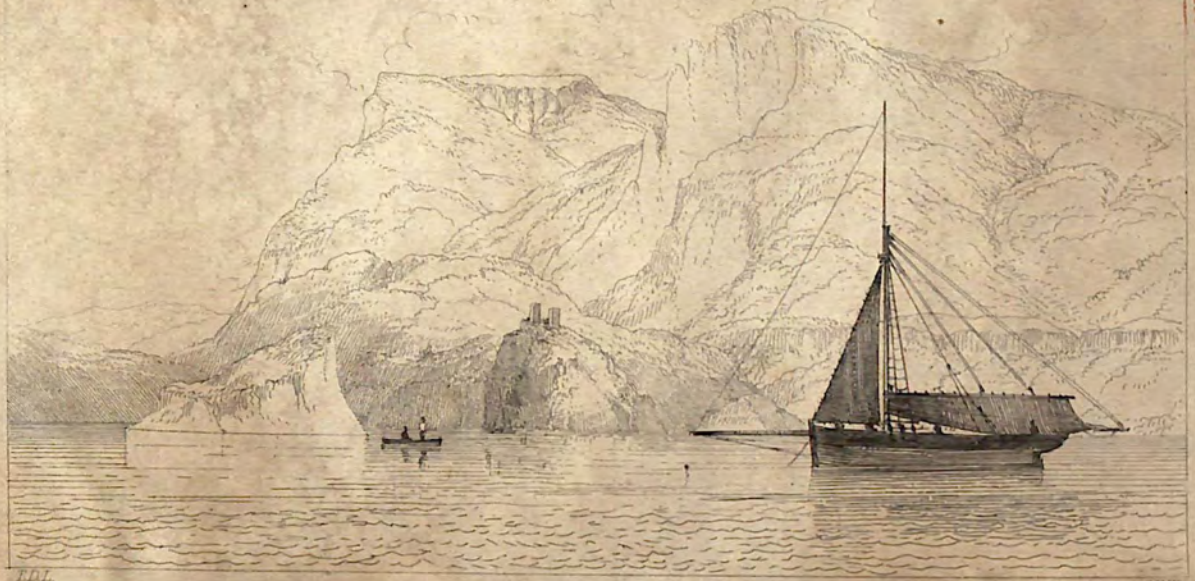
The small island of Fladda, as its name implies, is flat and low. It seemed extremely rich in pasture, and was covered with cattle. Within the bay in which it stands we observed a broader and better stretch of cultivation than we have lately witnessed in these maritime Highlands. Proceeding on our voyage westwards and beyond Loch Staffin, the picturesque island of Eilan-

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xxxi., p. 253.

Altivaig presented a fine example of columnar basalt. But the mountain of Scormore (?) which rises inland and behind it, is one of the grandest natural objects to be seen in this quarter of the country, and is probably beheld with increased advantage from the sea. As we glided along, it seemed to alter its form and character almost every moment. At one time it appeared to be fortified by tremendous battlements,—again it upheaved as if by magic the most eccentric pikes and pinnacles,—while the grassy slopes which swept down from its more rocky regions were waved backwards into verdant cones and knolls, presenting a witchery of effect but seldom seen. We ere long passed Trodda, another fluted island, on the shore of which stands a singular detached columnar rock. Rounding the last named island, we speedily made our way between it and one of smaller size, but noted for the rich abundance of its pasture, called Fladda-huna. This island is the great breeding haunt of the puffin,—*Fratercula arctica*, a species which arrives in the earlier part of May, literally covering the rocks and ledgy cliffs with its feathered thousands. Although these have no concern with our grouse

shooting season, they almost totally disappear exactly on the 12th of August. Fladda-huna lies about six miles from the nearest point of Skye, and is itself scarcely a mile in length, with an average breadth of about 300 yards. There is no such grass for sheep in all the parish. It was once the site of a druidical temple, and the people of Skye assert, and we presume believe, that neither reptiles nor vermin of any kind will live upon its soil. Four little isles rise close around it, on each of which are reared some two or three sheep.

The scenery around Ru-hunish to our left was striking. The cliffs immediate to the sea were formed of gigantic prisms of such large proportions as to resemble the towers of castles grouped together,—each being several yards in diameter. Above these, and farther back, were some of the loftiest columns of the more ordinary thickness we had yet observed. On the whole the basaltic or columnar scenery of the north of Skye exceeds in the lofty grandeur of its ranges whatever Staffa or the Giant's Causeway can produce, although the angular forms of the two latter are more minutely finished and symmetrical. The rocks



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and cliffs and broken mountains were both bold and beautiful, till we came round upon the more southern shores which border the great entrance to Loch Snizort, where the uprising of the ground is gradual and more extended in its sloping portion, the pasturage greener and richer, with a church in sight, a slated house here and there, a good sprinkling of huts and hut-like peat stacks, and long frequent strips of arable land, bearing what seemed respectable crops of barley and potatoes. We understand that fewer sheep and a larger proportion of grain are raised in this quarter than in other parts of the island. Kilmuir, indeed, is regarded as the granary of Skye.

We were soon off the fine old Castle of Duntulm, the ancient residence of the Macdonalds. It stands upon a high and rocky, almost seagirt point, and in remote times must have been nearly impregnable. Previous to its erection into a lordly mansion by the clan Donuill, who originated in the twelfth century, it is believed to have been a Dun or fort, inhabited by one of the Vikinger or Island Kings, a pirate race who had invaded and subdued our Western Isles prior to

the great Norwegian Conquest in the days of Harold Harfäger. In later times (towards the close of the sixteenth century) a treacherous nephew, one Uistean MacGhilliaspuig Chlieirich, endeavoured to deprive his uncle, Donull Gòrm Mòr, the reigning chieftain, of his territorial possessions. Uistean, that is Hugh, was called Clèirich (or the Clerk) on account of his being able to write,—a rare species of handiwork in those dirking days. It would appear, however, from his after fate, that "a little writing is a dangerous thing," or at least requires *address* in the management, if the clerk is not ambitious of becoming literally "a stickit writer." Our present Donull was grandson of that Donull Gòrm whose death by an arrow while besieging Eillandonan Castle in Kintail we have already mentioned in a preceding portion of our voyage. On a certain occasion, Uistean being in the Outer Hebrides, wrote a couple of letters,—one of which was intended for a confederate in Skye, to whom he revealed his plot,—the other, full of the most kindly sentiments, for his uncle. But it unfortunately happened, in spite of his clerkship, that he addressed the former instead of the latter

letter to his relative, who immediately became alarmed by this peculiar and unexpected expression of nepotal affection, and despatched a trusty messenger to seize upon Uistean, and bring him as a prisoner to Duntulm Castle. This, however, was in some respects easier said than done, for Uistean was a fellow of considerable strength and agility. When he saw a body of armed men close upon his residence, he knew that escape by flight was impossible, so he suddenly disguised himself in female attire, and commenced grinding with a *quern* or hand-mill, among the other inmates by whom he was surrounded. But his huge size, and masculine aspect attracted the observation of the party: they seized upon him, a desperate struggle ensued, and the result was for some time doubtful. However, his unusual dress not only encumbered himself, but probably gave his antagonists a better purchase, and so he was finally overpowered, fast bound, and carried prisoner to his uncle. The old gentleman was very obdurate and revengeful, neither asking nor giving any explanations, but proceeded immediately to throw him into the vaulted dungeon of Duntulm, chaining him for greater safety to the floor. There, after leaving

him for some time to reflect upon his previous life and conversation, they supplied him with a substantial meal of salt beef, after which he naturally stretched forth his hand to seize a covered pitcher by his side, and—found it empty. He was then allowed to die of thirst. This man's skeleton was disinterred some ages after, and was recognised by the great size of the thigh-bones and skull. These lay for many seasons in the walls and recesses of the old church, till buried again about eighteen years ago.*

On opening the mouth of Loch Snizort we could discern once more, towering across the country in the far south-eastern distance, our old gigantic friends the Cuillen mountains, and longed again to penetrate their deep recesses. We did not explore the last named loch, but merely crossed its wider portion in the direction of Vaternish Point. There is a salmon fishery station at its head, a few tons of cod and ling are cured, and transmitted to Glasgow and Liverpool, but the herring hordes have failed. Yet not many years ago these last were caught in such vast numbers

* *Loc. cit.*, p. 259.

in large circular enclosures, called yairs or *cairidhs*, at the head of the bays in shallow water, that before they could be cured by salting, they became a pestilent nuisance in the air. Near the head of Loch Snizort also stood the small dwelling-house of Kingsburgh, a place of some note, as the residence, during a portion of her married life, of Flora Macdonald, the fair conductress of the unfortunate Prince Charles Edward, whom she brought from Long Island to a place called Monkstadt in Kilmuir. She died in 1790. As we made the Vaternish district the mists began again to fall around us. The nearer point seemed comparatively low, but across Loch Foliart, which we were now about to enter, Dunvegan Head, a bold projecting cape, loomed loftily before us. During all this day although the coasts of Skye, and sundry smaller islands close at hand, were the more special objects of our regard, we also had in view (and still hold in grateful remembrance) the conical mountains of Harris in the western distance, and the broken lines of North and South Uist, with Benbecula between the latter, and Barra Head far southwards.

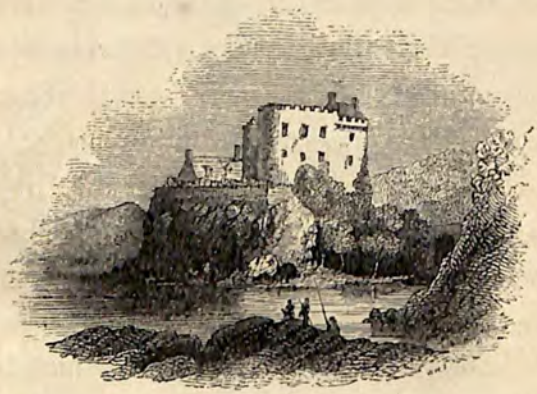
The entrance to Loch Foliart is broad and open. The scenery, subdued by twilight shades, seemed soft and beautiful, though not deficient in grandeur. Towards evening the wind came more a-head, and we made slower progress. When the obscurity of night finally closed upon us, we had not reached any anchorage ground on which our pilot could rely, so instead of running among the narrows in the dark, we hove to till morning twilight, and then, while those below were buried in unconscious slumber, the Princess Royal made her way upwards, and cast anchor off Dunvegan Castle.

On going on deck on the morning of the 27th, we found the weather of the worst description, extremely windy, very wet, dark and dismal as Erebus, and consequently disgusting to the feelings both of man and beast. We alluded formerly while at Castle Tyrim, to the trap-like and narrow windings of the Highland sea-lochs, and we found our present position at the head of Loch Foliart one of these. We were safely, almost snugly anchored, but the wind blew boisterously up the narrow strait in which we lay, and to work

our way outwards was impossible. So we were obliged to exercise our patience till the storm abated.

We were now in the centre of that western portion of Skye which consists of the two great promontories of Duirinish and Vaternish, the former or southern division constituting the principal part of the parish of Duirinish, while the northern section of the latter now forms a separate parish *quoad sacra*, having been selected for the site of one of the new Parliamentary churches. The most noted mountains in this part of the island, are those called the greater and lesser Helvel, which rise to the height of about 1700 feet, and are characterised by a verdant surface, regularly sloping sides, and summits remarkable for level lines, by reason of which mariners have named them Macleod's Tables. A range of hilly ground proceeds from the greater Helvel to Dunvegan (or Galtrigil) Head, while from the lesser a corresponding range runs southwards, ending in the magnificent rocky points of Idrigal and Waterstein. Near the former point stand Macleod's Maidens, those singular exposed and isolated rocks, with a brief notice of which we commenced

our account of the coasts of Skye. The country people regard them as a mother and her daughters, —calling the forlorn matron *Nic Cleosgeir Mhor*.



The ancient Castle of Dunvegan rose before us, close upon the northern shore of a small embayment of the sea. The weather moderating slightly in the forenoon, we landed for the purpose of inspection, as well as to despatch our letters. Like most other dwellings of ancient chieftains it stands upon a rock, though not a lofty one. It affords the only example of those strongholds of ancient times which we have yet met with continuing to be inhabited by human beings, and these the direct descendants of its earliest owners; for Dunolly, Dunstaffnage, Castle Tyrim, and the rest, are

merely apparitions,—the spectral representatives of old ancestral halls, untenanted (" save by the bat and owl") and in utter ruin. Dunvegan is by far the most important and extensive of these feudal dwellings we have seen. It consists of a great variety of massive buildings, obviously of very different ages as well as character, forming in combination three sides of an irregular square, the open portion facing the sea, and overlooking it from the edge of an embrasured rock, steep, but of moderate height. On the top of the rock, and partially enclosed by the lateral portions of the building, there is a pretty large platform or open court, in which a few trees of ash and alder flourish. Though the general pile is imposing from its size and situation, from its dark rocks below, almost surrounded by the wild ocean waters, and its massive square towers, in part thickly mantled by luxuriant ivy, yet it is less picturesque than might be expected, chiefly we daresay from some of its more modern additions being built in an unaccommodating *house-like* form not amalgamating with the prevailing character of the scene. We also saw the whole concern, both in and out, to disadvantage, as a few weeks ago an immense range of

buildings had been taken down, and there were at the moment about a score of south-country masons (large, athletic, fair-haired, fresh-complexioned men, at once distinguishable from the surrounding and more swarthy Celts), at work upon the premises. These were consequently bespattered with lime, the flooring of many rooms uplifted, and halls crowded and passages almost blocked up with various ranges of hewn stones and cut timber. The last Laird of Macleod lived long in London, and little attention had been paid to this ancient dwelling for a length of time either before or since his death; but his son, a young married man, is now effecting great improvements. We could scarcely judge of the character of the rooms, with their dusty furniture, broken plaster, rent pannelling, and all those other discomforts which precede the remodelling now in agitation. This Castle has evidently great capabilities, and a judicious combination of ancient baronial grandeur, with the more luxurious and refined comforts of modern elegance, will render it a princely place:—but the Secretary (whose fine taste and feeling on such points may be well relied on) seemed sorely distressed that a principal portion of the interior,

containing a magnificent old hall 80 feet in length by 20, had been taken down.

Dunvegan Castle, the almost immemorial residence of the Macleods of Macleod, is a place of great antiquity. The most ancient portion is said to have been built in the ninth century. Another portion consisting of a lofty tower, was added a few hundred years afterwards by Alastair Crotach, or the Humpbacked (son of William, slain at the battle of the Bloody Bay), who was the head of the family in 1493. The lower and more lengthened edifice which conjoins these two was the work of Rory Mòr, who was knighted in the time of James VI. Various additions have since been made in later ages, and the whole is now large, massive, and imposing, the grey rocks and lofty walls seeming to blend together in natural unison. On one side the sea, on another a small river, on a third a deep ravine separating the site of the castle by a chasm from a neighbouring height, present good features of defence, and we could observe a curious small postern, now closed up, which formerly opened in the rampart towards the sea, and probably in ancient troublous times afforded the only means of entering to and fro.

The bay forms a good and convenient natural harbour, and as there is an excellent spring of pure water on the rock, the site may be regarded as well chosen. Proceeding by a pathway round the bay, we approached the castle by a wooded ascent, and gained its more immediate precincts by crossing a bridge which now spans the narrow chasm before mentioned, and would have been of more consistent character had it been a drawbridge. From this side also the castle, with its projecting battlements, lofty turrets, and embrazured walls, certainly presents a very striking aspect. From the higher ramparts we rejoiced to see a considerable breadth of wood had been planted by the late Macleod, and was thriving charmingly; but abundance of broad bare hills remain, and the present chief will find ample room for the exercise of his arboreal taste.—"Be ay' stickin' in a tree:—it'll grow when you'r sleepin'." The garden grounds and shrubbery were sheltered by thick and well kept hedges, and our after experience told us that their vegetable products were excellent. The *Glendale* cabbage, which grew originally at the head of Loch Poltiel in this parish, is noted not only in Skye, but the mainland, for its happy

combination of large size and delicate flavour. It is said to have sprung from seed obtained from a foreign vessel, wrecked on the coast many years ago.*

Some curious antiquities mentioned by Sir Walter Scott in the Diary of his Hebridean Voyage, and more especially described in the Notes to the Lord of the Isles, were not at this time shown to visitors,—the family being from home. The Secretary seemed to handle with great satisfaction a "borrit whinger," or dirk with seven perforations in the blade. By putting a peg into any one of these holes, high or low, the quantity of cold steel about to be administered could be regulated at pleasure. Sir Walter slept in what is called the haunted chamber, which, and the view from it, he has described as follows:—"Except perhaps some tapestry hangings, and the extreme thickness of the walls, which argued great antiquity, nothing could have been more comfortable than the interior of the apartment; but if you

* For these and other notices see the Rev. Archibald Clerk's Sketch of the parish of Duirinish, in *New Statistical Account*, No. xxxi., p. 322.

looked from the windows the view was such as to correspond with the highest tone of superstition. An autumnal blast, sometimes clear, sometimes driving mist before it, swept along the troubled billows of the lake, which it occasionally concealed, and by fits disclosed. The waves rushed in wild disorder on the shore, and covered with foam the steep pile of rocks, which rising from the sea in forms something resembling the human figure, have obtained the name of Macleod's Maidens, and in such a night seemed no bad representative of the Norwegian goddesses, called Choosers of the Slain, or Riders of the Storm."* Who is not grateful for the gorgeous pictures which the great limner has drawn both of the deeply-centered soul of human life, and the varied magnificence of external nature? And who has read his "Life," without remembering the beautiful passage in which his biographer explains how in spite of the naturally strong and self-controlling power of Scott's mind, he could not so cast his thoughts habitually into the region of imaginative dreams, reaping the glory of an almost life-long abstraction,

* *Letters on Demonology.*

while gazing like a second Shakspeare on all that bright array (concealed, till he chose his time, from other men by curtains of thick darkness) and yet on all occasions bend himself to the consideration of the actual circumstances by which he was surrounded! "We should ask ourselves whether, filling and discharging so soberly and gracefully as he did the common functions of social man, it was not nevertheless impossible but that he must have passed most of his life in other worlds than ours; and we ought hardly to think it a grievous circumstance that their bright visions should have left a dazzle sometimes on the eyes which so gently re-opened upon our prosaic realities." Mr. Lockhart of course alludes to the embarrassments by which he allowed himself to become involved; but the explanation hinted at may also apply in a general way to every accidental (we shall not say inaccurate) commingling of nature's real and imagined features which we may chance to find in his always vivid pictures. The circumstance to which we come at last is this:—It is impossible from any portion of Dunvegan Castle, or from any point in its vicinity, to see "Macleod's Maidens" at all. They lie across the country altogether, near the entrance to Loch Bracadale, and under the screen of the lofty land

which intervenes between Macleod's dwelling and the Point of Idrigill.

The family of Macleod, usually regarded as of northern origin, is one of the most ancient in the kingdom, and was formerly possessed of territorial property of vast extent.* Tradition bears that

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* According to Mr. W. F. Skene, there is no substantial authority for this alleged Norwegian descent of the Clan Leod, although the family acquired large estates in Skye by marriage with the daughter of Macraild or Macarailt, one of the Norwegian nobles of the Isles. Mr. Skene further informs us that the original possessions of the Macleods were Glenelg, of which district David II. granted a charter to Malcolm, son of Tormod Macleod, the *reddendo* being to keep a galley with thirty-six oars for the use of his Majesty. He thinks that Macleod of Glenelg (and of Harris, &c.) was of old the proper chief of the entire clan, and that the marriage of a younger son of that family with the heiress of Assgut and Lewis gave rise to the family of Macleods of Lewis, the oldest cadets of the clan, and now represented by Macleod of Raasay. See *The Highlanders of Scotland*, vol. ii., p. 273. Mr. Gregory, on the other hand, seems to regard the Siol (or race of) Torquil and the Siol Tormod as two distinct and powerful clans (with chiefs of equal rank) independent of each other, although descended, according to tradition, from our common ancestor (not Adam but Leod). Their armorial bearings, he also observes, are different, —that of Lewis being a burning mount, that of Harris a castle. —*History of the Western Highlands*, p. 74.

Torf-Einar, the Norwegian Earl of Orkney, brother of the great Rolf-Gaunger, commonly called Rollo the Dane (the founder of the Duchy of Normandy), had among other descendants one named Thorfinn, who like many wiser men left a numerous family of ill-tempered and contentious sons, who quarrelling for the inheritance in Skye, shed blood like water. Of these, one of milder manners, and indisposed to broil and battle, whose name was Leod, withdrew to the island of Lewis, the Gaelic name of which, —Leodhas,—still testifies his habitation. He was the common ancestor of the clan Macleod, which ramified into two main branches with his sons Tormod and Torquil,—from the former of whom descended the chief of the Macleods of Skye, sometimes denominated of Harris, of Dunvegan, of Macleod, (likewise of Glenelg), from the latter the Macleods of Lewis still represented, though not in the direct male line, by the Macleods of Raasay.*

Fierce feuds long prevailed between the Macleods and the Macdonalds of Uist, and a sanguinary combat took place at Ardmore in Vaternish. The Macleods were assembled for divine

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xxxi., p. 331.

service in the church of Trumpan, when the enemy coming suddenly upon them, set the building on fire, and destroyed all the worshippers except a woman who escaped in the confusion of the fray. The inhabitants of the neighbouring districts were, however, roused by the unwonted appearance of smoke and flame, and before the Macdonalds could regain their vessels they were attacked and slain. Their bodies were then ranged in line by the side of a stone-wall which skirted the scene of combat, and was thrown down upon the bloody foe. The traditionary records of the country seem to have attached more importance to the upsetting of the stones than the overthrow of the enemy, as the fray in question is still known as *Blar Milleadh Garaidh*,—the battle of the destruction of the dyke. Large quantities of human bones are still found on turning over some loose stones which lie scattered on the ground. The minister mildly remarks that "the smothering of the Macdonalds by the Macleods in the Cave of Eig, while a barbarous, was not an inappropriate retaliation for the work at Vaternish." We think the work of the dry-dyke was more immediate, and not less appropriate, in its way.

The ruins of the church of Trumpan are interesting from another source. They contain the mortal remains of the mysteriously fated Lady Grange, the captive of St. Kilda. This lady was daughter of Chiesly of Dalry, and seems to have inherited his headstrong and passionate temper. She married Mr. Erskine of Grange, a Lord of Session by the title of Lord Grange, and Lord Justice Clerk during the terminal years of Queen Anne. His brother, the Earl of Mar, headed the rebellion of 1715, and although he himself did not openly join the rebels, he aided them with both advice and money. Lady Grange, on the other hand, was warmly attached to the House of Hanover, and having discovered the designs of her husband and his accomplices, she threatened during the displeasure of a family quarrel, to reveal to Government their traitorous intentions. Her husband was but too well acquainted with her violent and resentful character, and knowing that his own safety, and that of his adherents, could no longer be relied upon, it was determined she should be immured in the meantime, and a report of her death put in circulation. Macleod of Dunvegan and Macdonald of Sleat agreed to remove her,

whenever an opportunity was offered, to their remote, and at that time almost inaccessible estates in Skye. Accordingly, her death was announced, and her funeral ceremony conducted with becoming gravity, while she herself was seized and carried by difficult and devious routes to her place of destination, offering, however, so violent a resistance in the first place, that two of her teeth were knocked out before she could be overpowered. She was first confined for a time in Skye, then sent to the island of Uist, and eventually to the lonely and remote St. Kilda, where she was kept for seven years. She was then re-transmitted to Skye, from whence she contrived to send a letter concealed in a clue of thread, announcing her existence to her indignant friends. Government now dispatched a sloop of war to effect her liberation, but the fastnesses of Skye are by no means easy to explore, and her jailors, for greater safety, immediately immured her in the cave of Idrigil, a place now frequented by fishermen along the coast. She was next transferred again to Uist, the person who conveyed her there being provided with a piece of stout rope, with a running noose at one end and a heavy stone at the other, the

use of which, should the sloop of war have hove in view, it is as easy to imagine as describe. But they crossed the Minch without the necessity of that catastrophe. Being afterwards brought for the third time to Skye, she at last ended her days in the district of Vaternish, and was layed, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

This quarter of Skye was at one time famous for its breed of pipers. These were the Macrimmons, hereditary and most martial musicians to the Macleods of Dunvegan, and who are supposed to have derived their name "whether on fanciful or conclusive ground," says the Minister, "we pretend not to say," from the fact of the first performer who bore it having studied his profession at Cremona. The family became so celebrated, that pupils were sent to them from all parts of the Highlands, and at length a school, a kind of piping college, was established in the farm of Borcraig, on the opposite side of Loch Foliart from Dunvegan Castle. "The whole tuition was carried on as systematically as in any of our modern academies; and the names of some of the caves and knolls in the vicinity still point

out the spots where the scholars used to practise respectively on the chanter, the small pipe, and the *Piob mhor*, or large bagpipe, before exhibiting in presence of the master."

On returning on board the Cutter, we found Mr. Tolmy, an extensive farmer of the neighbourhood, waiting our arrival. He had come on board in the first place conceiving we were the Revenue Cutter of that coast, with whose commander (Captain Beatson) he was acquainted. However we hope he found us a good substitute, as he kindly favoured us with his company for the evening. If we treated him well, he treated us still better, for he afterwards sent us an entire sheep,—a splendid black-faced wether,—without fee or reward.* He informed us that a very large whale had been noticed off the Skye coast for four or five years. It was probably the one we saw near Eilan-Glass. He said that the island was admirably adapted for grazing, but that little should be attempted in the way of agriculture except for

* Also a brace of Skye terriers, now named Uginish and Foliart,—the former of which rejoices in the baronial halls of the Grange House, while the latter is seemingly satisfied beneath an humbler cottage roof at no great distance.

potatoes, as the crops are so liable to be destroyed by high wind and heavy rain. Between thirty and forty years ago horses and black cattle were the chief produce, sheep being few in number, and kept almost entirely for domestic use. The native breed of the latter, called *caoirich bheaga*, were extremely small, seldom weighing more than thirty pounds, and of various colours. Their wool was fine, their mutton of delicate flavour, and their familiar habits of use in admitting of the ewes being daily milked. About forty years ago, the *caoirich mhora*, or southern black-faced breed, were introduced for the first time. These throve well; but, in their turn, are fast yielding to the Cheviots, which are found to be the most profitable and productive stock. Comparatively few black cattle are now reared, at least in the west of Skye. An improved husbandry has been introduced and adopted by the proprietors and wealthier tenants, but is scarcely, if at all, followed by the lower classes. "Much food," says Solomon, "is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment."—*Prov.* xiii. 23.

A great amount of destitution and distress has

prevailed in these and other parts of Skye during recent years. Over population (the usual consequence of improvident poverty), the evils of the crofting system, the absence in these peaceful times of the recruiting service, the cessation or decrease of the kelp manufacture, the general diminution of the herring fishery, and the want of will or of ability to emigrate,—these are probably the chief among the varied causes of that poverty and suffering which it is so painful to witness without relieving in numerous Highland districts. Of course there are faults to correct as well as misfortunes to endure, though we desire not to dwell upon the former, seeing that we love the people, who have had much to bear even from changes in the state of society elsewhere advantageous. It is not their fault that proprietors now-a-days require money rather than men, and that the latter in greatly extended grazing farms are of little or no avail. What Celtic sage from Sutherland to Cantyre will now admit that "In the multitude of people is the king's honour; but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince!" But their indolence and inactivity, except by fits and starts, cannot be denied, and their dark, moist,

dirty dwellings, with the unseemly byre as a hall of entrance, are surely their own free choice rather than nature's doom. It may be mentioned as a good example of the prejudice produced by long-formed habits, that for some years after the construction of roads in Skye, the common people refused to travel on them, alleging that the hard surface of stone and gravel wore their shoes, and bruised their feet, and so they long continued to follow the old uneven paths,—

"O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare."

The time and occupation of these people seem also too much divided betwixt sea and land,—between the cultivation of their miserable crofts with the old cas-chrom (literally the *crooked leg*), and their toilsome and more dangerous labours on the great deep,—their implements being probably insufficient for either purpose. We have no skill in political economy, but this we know,—that while people in the west of Skye profess to be starving of hunger for want of remunerating occupation, there are boats from Banff on the eastern coast of Scotland, in the mouths of these very lochs, making an excellent and productive fishery. Five or six of these Banff boats, with strong and healthy

crews, occupied in the catching of cod and ling, had taken up their quarters in the island of Eilan-Isa, a few miles outwards from our anchorage ground. Their skill and enterprise having attracted attention, they were offered, for the sake of an encouraging example, that island free of rent, if they would settle on it with their families. The spirit of their answer implied, that they could not serve two masters, that they lived entirely by fishing, which enabled them to purchase whatever was required for their domestic comforts, and which they could not do if they tried to combine with their sea labours the cultivation of the crofts of Eilan-Isa. So they prefer the toil of coming and going by the stormy passage of the Pentland Firth. Now the natives not only want seaworthy boats, but we fear they are themselves deficient in that active enterprising spirit of prolonged exertion which would render these available to proper purpose. Notwithstanding the necessities of actual want, and admitting the wisdom of those humane exertions by which they were sought to be supplied, we believe that not a little of the Government bounty in the way of meal, &c., was misbestowed in the encouragement of

indolence. We think that the process of *artificial forcing* (as gardeners term it) is generally unadvisable, but it might be an advantageous measure for the proprietors (aided perhaps by a small grant from Government) to endeavour to excite the energy of the people by bestowing a few premium boats, with a small drift of nets, upon the more active and industrious of the poorer fishermen. We know that while to satisfy their idle itch for tillage, they keep scratching away at their exhausted patches of barren land, they often lose an opportunity of clearing from five to ten shillings a day by catching cod and ling,—to say nothing of herrings, which though now irregular in entering up the lochs, exist we doubt not in more or less abundance at a greater distance from the shore.*

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* It is observed in the *Statistical Account* that these herrings are found of very different qualities in the different lochs that indent the parish of Duirinish, and that they are almost always found of the same quality and appearance in the same loch. "This would seem," says the minister, "to warrant the belief, that herrings like salmon, have peculiar localities to which they regularly resort." It may also warrant the belief either that certain lochs are distinguished by the excellence of their attri-

The most distressful feature of the poverty of these people is its demoralising influence. The flocks of the sheep farmers are yearly thinned by the reckless hand of want, goaded on by approaching famine, and uncontrolled by the now nearly dissevered chains of feudal affection. This indefensible practice has recently led to the proposal that a *rural police* should be established in the island. Blue coats and scarlet collars starting up amid the seclusion of the crag-encompassed Quiraing!

> "Sing mournfully, Oh! mournfully,
> The solitude of Binnorie."

Being anxious before leaving Skye to complete our notes regarding the insular distribution of British quadrupeds and reptiles, we made various inquiries into the subject, without, however, being able to free it altogether from uncertainty. Red-deer and roe are the most noted of the native mammalia. If either hares or rabbits occur (and of neither could we find a trace) they do so in

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butes as feeding ground,—or that the herrings themselves, according to their particular condition of advancement as spawning fish, prefer different localities at different periods of their progress.

consequence of importation. Neither martens nor badgers exist in Skye, though weazels and wild-cats are well known. The polecat is either not actually indigenous, or extremely rare. Thus, Mr. Mackinnon of Strath informs us that " the only polecat ever seen in the island was some years ago killed in this parish, in the vicinity of one of the ferries to the mainland. From this circumstance, it is probable that it might have unobserved found its way across in the ferry-boat." Mr. Clerk of Duirinish states in somewhat too general terms, that " the quadrupeds common on the mainland of Scotland, are all to be found here, except the hare, mole, and polecat, which are not to be met with in Skye. Hares have been introduced once or twice; but they very speedily disappeared, whether owing to the jealousy of those who feed them, but have not the privilege of shooting them, or to the unsheltered nature of the country, I have not the means of ascertaining. The other two species of animals have, I believe, been never seen in the island,—a fact which the inhabitants have no cause to regret." Squirrels, hedgehogs, and many of the smaller mainland quadrupeds are unknown. Rats and mice, with their customary

spirit of accommodation, have spread themselves in various quarters. Frogs, toads, and lizards occur among the moors, and moister places, and serpents, though by no means numerous, are sometimes seen.

Skye, in common with our other islands, and the Scottish Highlands in general, must have been in former ages a well wooded country,—roots and trunks of trees being found imbedded in the moss in many quarters. But now, however broad and deep may be the shadows of its collected clouds, few regions of the earth exhibit less of "leafy umbrage."

Kilmuir, its most northern district, though comparatively speaking a grain country, does not seem adapted to the growth of timber. "When trees," says Mr. Macgregor, "attain a certain height, they invariably wither. None are, therefore, found in it, with the exception of a little brushwood in two or three places. With the view of making a fair experiment as to the growth of wood, the late noble proprietor planted, in 1831, about ten acres of enclosed ground, with the following kinds of trees, viz. larch, ash, spruce, mountain-ash, silver-fir, elm, beech, and Huntingdon willow; but all

of them have long ago decayed. Bushes for small fruit thrive well, provided they be enclosed and sheltered in fenced gardens." There is little or no wood in the parishes of Snizort and Strath. We have already alluded to the plantations of Dunvegan in the Duirinish district. With the exception of some scraggy hazel, and stunted birches, there is no natural wood, but about sixty years ago, General Macleod commenced planting, and the practice has been continued by both his successors. The larch may be regarded as the most congenial both to soil and climate, but oak, ash, plane, beech, alder, and birch, thrive tolerably well. Scotch fir has not succeeded.

In the south eastern promontory, which forms the district of Sleat, the plantations around Armadale are thriving and extensive, and the thinning of the wood now begins to supply the parish with the timber required for boat-building and the ordinary purposes of agriculture. In the more northern parish of Portree there is no natural wood, with the exception of a scanty sprinkling in the island of Raasay, nearly annihilated in 1836–7, when the people, having been unable from the unfavourable season to secure their peats, and being

otherwise extremely destitute, appropriated the wood as fuel. Near the mansion-house of Raasay there are a few old trees of considerable size, and both in that island and around the village of Portree there are some thriving young plantations, chiefly of larch, Scotch fir, birch, oak, ash, and alder,—the first named being generally regarded as the most appropriate to the soil.

CHAPTER VII.

SOUND OF HARRIS—NORTH UIST—BENBECULA—SOUTH UIST—ERISKAY—SOUND OF FLODDAY—BARRA—CASTLE KISHMUL—LOCH TANGESTAL—VATERSAY—MULDONICH—SANDERAY—PABBAY—MINGALAY—BARRA HEAD.

HAVING made arrangements during the preceding evening for an early start (wind and weather permitting), we heard the grating sound of the chain cable, as the anchor was upheaved soon after daylight on the morning of the 28th July, but were too sleepy to think much about it at the moment. Some hours later, while reflecting on ham and eggs, we felt sorry to quit the coasts of Skye, which had been so long a source of varied interest, and the subject of much delightful contemplation.

On working our way to the mouth of Loch Foliart, we found a heavy sea running, with the wind very boisterous, and right a-head. Our pilot advised us to beat across towards the Harris shore, after gaining which we should have a freer

course for the remaining portions of the Long Island. We took his advice, and got a tremendous tossing, but the vessel behaved herself beautifully, stuck to the wind in the most tenacious manner imaginable, and only once, when struck at a critical time by a heavy sea, did she show a moment's hesitation in *staying*. Before leaving Skye, one long extended tack gave us a good notion of the character of that small portion of its coast which we had not hitherto approached, viz. its most south-western shore, from the headland of Dunvegan outwards to that of Copnahow. We had thus very nearly circumnavigated the island, from the front of Macleod's Maidens to the other side of these same.

Having reached the Harris coast, we ran southwards across the entrance to the Sound of Harris, a strait much burdened by various insular rocks, which separates that island from North Uist. The name of the latter is supposed to signify *vist*, or west, as denoting the most occidental range of the northern nations in this quarter. It is cut up and intersected by most complicated reticulations of water, salt and fresh, in a manner altogether unparalelled elsewhere in the history of

mother earth. A range of lowish hills, varying from three to seven hundred feet in height, pervades the eastern coast, indented however by the mouths of these interlacing inlets of the sea. Within this range westwards, and almost commingled with the briny waters, occur a countless collection of small fresh water lakes, glittering in the dark mossy bosom of low and barren moors. Then arises some high and heathy ground, followed by another moor bearing some flats and meadows, the western shores consisting of a belt of finely comminuted and calcareous sand, which being composed originally of broken shells, possesses the qualities of lime, and when intermingled with the decaying vegetation of the moorish district, produces an arable as well as pastoral land of great value. The easily heated sand, however, is apt in dry and sunny seasons to wither up its own productions, whether of grass or grain; so it requires a moist climate, and we doubt not has obtained it. On the other hand, we are sorry, and somewhat perplexed, to find that "the finer, the softer, the more tender, and the more valuable grasses, are melted away by the rain," &c., so that the cattle during winter and early spring depend

chiefly on the stores of the corn yard, and suffer even to death if these are insufficient. But this remark is said not to apply to the eastern coast, where there are good winterings for cattle. On this side also occur the only safe and commodious harbours, such as Cheese Bay, Loch Maddy, and Loch West. Many islands surround its other coasts. A peculiar cave presents itself not far from the parish church, at the point of Tighary. It enters by an archway in the rock, and proceeding inwards beneath the surface, finally opens upwards by means of a perforation twelve feet in diameter. During a storm a vast volume of outrageous sea rushes through the cavern's jaws, wave pressing upon wave its huge upheaving bulk, till the inner waters, pent up by rocks on either side, with the iron arch above, and behind the " hell of waters," spring upwards through the orifice, like a gigantic geyser, from the bowels of the earth, sometimes attaining a height of 200 feet. The fresh water lakes are inhabited not only by trout of the ordinary kind, and a few salmon, but some which communicate very directly with the sea possess sethe and other sea-fish of large size and in good condition. Wild

geese breed on the fresh water islands, and when congregated with other kinds in autumn, are extremely destructive to the crops. Red-deer also haunt these insulated shelters, and the mode of stalking them is somewhat peculiar. "The sportsmen rendezvous at a place previously fixed on, and each with an attendant is appointed to a pass along the lakes, which he cautiously approaches; and when all are presumed to be at their stations, another party, with a small boat provided for the purpose, come up as quietly as possible. The deer, scared from their fastnesses in the islands, make for some of the passes, and it very rarely happens that a chance of a good shot is not afforded to some one or more of the sportsmen concealed under the cover of the heather."*

The fisheries off this island are scarcely at all attended to, although cod, ling, and superlative flounders occur along the coast, and herrings are sometimes seen, though seldom taken. A great resource of the people is drawn from a most abundant supply of blue cockles, of the largest size and most delicate flavour. They rake them up

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xxxi., p. 165.

in millions from the sandy shores. A great and still remunerating occupation of the natives is the formation of kelp, which is yet carried on to a large extent, though sadly fallen off in value. Perhaps none of the litoral estates of Scotland have suffered a heavier depression of rent in consequence of the altered value of this commodity, than our present group of islands. Their coast lines, from their tortuous nature, are of vast length, compared with their actual superficies. It still gives employment to about 400 families, from the beginning of June to the first of August. To increase the crop of sea-weed, stones are planted along shore. The clear proceeds from kelp alone of this parish in 1812, after deducting all expenses, was £14,000, and fell little short of that sum for several years thereafter. It has been calculated that the alteration of the law regarding the duty on barilla, reduced the income of the island and its dependencies from £17,500 per annum to £3500.* The manufacture now puts little directly into the landlord's pocket, though it enables the poorer tenants to pay the

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xxxi., p. 176.

rent of their little crofts. Lord Macdonald is the sole proprietor of North Uist and its islands. The people, with a slight exception, belong to the Presbyterian persuasion.*

We now passed at a rapid rate the Island of Benbecula, which is flat and unimposing in its general aspect, and separated from its larger

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* We had no opportunity of landing on North Uist, and so cannot speak of its inhabitants or their dwellings from actual inspection. The clergyman states that the natives are remarkably cleanly in their habits; that their houses in general are more capacious, and in every respect of a better description than those of many of the same class in more favoured situations; that chimneys and glass windows are not unfrequent; that the beds are snugly boxed with wood; and that all sweep and sand their floors daily. Their dress is neat, approaching at times even to fastidiousness. We are glad to hear of this central nucleus of improvement, which we trust will spread around. We confess we saw nothing of it among their neighbours, either north or south. Great improvements, however, have taken place in North Uist within the last twenty-five years. There is now about eighty miles of road throughout the island, and one hundred and eighty carts were counted in the parish several seasons back. He does not, however, say as to their being wheeled carts, or otherwise. In Barra, as we were afterwards informed, there are no carts with wheels except those belonging to the factor and the clergyman.

northern neighbour by a strait of about two miles in breadth, dry at low water. It is nearly circular in its shape, and about eight miles in diameter, but if possible still more elaborately cut up than the preceding Uist, by an endless labyrinthic intermingling of lochs and rocky islands,—

> "The throne
> Of chaos, and his dark pavilion spread
> Wide on the wasteful deep."

The wind at this time was blowing most tempestuously, and we drove along at the rate of nine knots an hour, although under double-reefed mainsail, and a reef in the foresail. We next approached South Uist, which is separated from Benbecula by a strait not more than half a mile in breadth at its narrowest portion, and likewise dry at low water. Besides Benbecula, Wia on the north-east, Eriskay on the south, and several smaller islands, are included in the parish of South Uist. The principal island is mountainous,—Heacle or Hecla (supposed to have been so named by the Danes, in remembrance of the great snow-covered Alp of Iceland) rising to the height of 2500 feet. The shores, however, are generally

speaking deficient in fine headlands. The elevated land is confined to the east side, the western districts being low and sandy. We passed successively Loch Skiport, Loch Eynort, and Loch Boisdale, all of which afford safe and capacious anchorage ground, though the mouth of the second named has a somewhat narrow entrance, with a low flat rock in its centre, covered by the tide at high water. Between the two former there is one of Prince Charlie's many subterranean dwellings. We forget if that bold adventurer indulged a taste for music, but he certainly had his wish gratified, if he ever sung,—

"Oh! had I a cave in some far distant shore!"

It is interesting to know that when Marshal Macdonald (whose grandfather, a native of the island, followed the Prince to France in 1746) visited the home of his ancestry, he carried away several stones in his pocket from the cave. It is curious also to reflect on the changes which his grandfather's flight occasioned in his own future fate and fortunes,—a Marshal of France, a warrior companion of Napoleon, a man of renown throughout the world, surrounded

"By bright emblazonry and horrent arms,"

instead of (as he might else have been) a poor and nameless cottar, or wild-eyed precarious fisherman with scarce a coat or shoes, and no baton in his hand but a weather-worn tiller, to guide his fearful craft amid these barren isles. We never happened to hear him give expression to sentiments such as these, but we know enough of human nature, even of a Celtic-Frenchman's soul, to feel assured that strange and many-mingled thoughts were with him then, when first surrounded by his uncouth kindred, and their unknown tongue. The smoky shieling, with its damp clay floor, its earthen walls, and squalid inmates,—were these alone in view? or thought he not of that far island-grave where his once fiery minded leader lay at last in peace? What a dazzling contrast to the solemn sombre silence with which his evening walk along those lonely shores might be encompassed, when his more habitual thoughts reverted to his martial fortunes, and—

"All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
With orient colours waving; with them rose
A forest of huge spears; and thronging helms
Appear'd, and serried shields in thick array."

A corresponding and equally unfortunate reduction of value has taken place in this island as in its northern neighbour of the same name. Kelp is still manufactured to the extent of above 1500 tons (bringing a price of not more than £3 per ton), but the rate of wages is necessarily lowered, and less benefit results to the population. The value to the proprietor has fallen from about £15,000 to less than £5000 per annum,—the rate of wages being about £2 per ton. Nearly 1900 people, including old and young of both sexes, are engaged in this manufacture for about a couple of months in summer, but as the required work of burning the sea-weed can only be successfully prosecuted in dry weather, a wet season is not a remunerating one. Each family may clear upon an average about £4. There is not less than £625 worth of eggs exported every year from this parish to Glasgow. The fishing is sparingly pursued, and chiefly by the Boisdale tenants. About 25 tons of cod and ling, at £20 per ton, bring in £500.

We here meet either with some antagonistic principle in the constitution of the country, or it

may be accidental circumstances, which debar the existence of the reptile race. There are neither snakes, lizards, newts, toads, nor frogs in South Uist. Rabbits, however, have been introduced, but deer are on the verge of extinction, there being now only a single hind in the whole parish, the others having found their way northwards.* The stock of black cattle (which in 1836 amounted, including stirks, to 5254), has been recently much improved. Cheviots and black-faced sheep have been also introduced for several years, although the small tenants continue the old diminutive breed, remarkable for the sweetness of their flesh, and their fine though scanty supply of wool. For economical purposes, there are far too many horses on these islands.

The largest lake in South Uist is named Loch Bee, and is situate in the north-west corner of the island. The sea flows into it at spring tides, so that it is not only well supplied with fine white trout, but with flounder and mullet—the last a delicious fish named *Jasg drimionn* in Gaelic.—

* *Loc. cit.*, p. 185.

"In this ile," says Dean Monro, "there are infinite number of fresh water loches; but there is ane maine loche callit Lochebi, three myle lange, and a arme of the sea has worne the earth that was at the ae end of this loche, quhilk the sea has gotten enteries to this fresche water loche, and in that narrow entries that the sea has gotten to the loche, the countreymen has bigit upe ane thicke dyke of rough staines, and penney stanes caste lange narrest, notwithstand the flowing streams of the sea enters throughe the said dyke of stanes in the said fresche water loche, and so ther is continually gettin stiking amange the roughe stains of the dyke foresaid, fluikes, podloches, skatts, and herings. Upone this loche ther is gottin a kynd of fishe, the quhantitie and shape of ane salmont, but it has na skaills at all; the under haffe, narrest his vombe, is quhyte, and the upmaist haffe, narrest his back, is als black as jett, with fines like to a salmont."

There are only two streams up which salmon find their way. They usually enter these for spawning purposes in the later weeks of September. The lesser moor-lochs abound in small black

insipid trouts, but those in the west side of the island, where the soil is dissimilar, are of much larger size and richer flavour. The Long Island, in general, including the whole group, presents an excellent field to the ichthyologist, in which to study the diversity of kinds, and ascertain the influence of physical agency, and more restricted local peculiarities of soil and situation, on the developement and continuance of such diversities. Cockles and other shell-fish occur here in great abundance. Large shoals of herrings are frequently seen upon the western shores, but the exposed position of that line of coast, and the absence of sheltering havens, render such bounty of Nature of little or no avail. We need scarcely repeat that trees are now unknown, although as usual trunks and branches are found imbedded in the mosses. The greater proportion of both South Uist and Benbecula belonged till lately to Macdonald of Clanranald, whose property, however, in this quarter (amounting to about 68,000 acres) has been purchased by Colonel Gordon of Cluny. The other proprietors are Mr. Macdonald of Boisdale, and Mr. Macdonald of Bornish. About

two-thirds of the population adhere to the Catholic (unreformed) Church. There are no Puseyites in this parish.

Passing Ru-Hewnam, the terminal promontory of the southern end of the island, we could distinguish on a high rock near Eriskay, a ruinous fort, or stronghold, called *Caistal à Bhrebider*, or the Weaver's Castle. Eriskay itself is an interesting island in our Scottish history, as the place where Prince Charles Stuart first landed on the 22d of July, 1745, from the Doutelle, a small French frigate of sixteen guns, which had brought him from Belleisle. She was at first convoyed by the Elizabeth, a ship of war of sixty-eight guns, but the latter having engaged a British ship of war, the Lion of fifty-eight guns, was so disabled as to be obliged to return to France, and the lesser vessel made her way alone to the Hebrides. She sailed again almost immediately, and landed her adventurers at Borradale, in Loch-na-Nuagh of the mainland, as formerly mentioned. After the disastrous result of the battle of Culloden, the Prince made his way from that same Borradale in an open boat, in which he was exposed during an entire night of pitchy darkness to a tempestuous

storm. They ran however about thirty leagues in eight hours, making the island of Benbecula in the morning. They remained among these remote islands for several weeks, the Prince himself being secreted for a considerable part of the time in South Uist, among the mountains of Corodale. He then effected his escape to Skye, through the well-known instrumentality of Flora Macdonald, and was at the same time accompanied by a man named Neil MacEachan, the eventual grandfather of Marshal Macdonald, Duke of Tarentum !

The whole of our passage this day was extremely tempestuous, and the stormy skies and raging billows were sufficiently in unison with our occasional reflections on these adverse fortunes of the last of the Stuarts. The landsmen had enough to do to hold their own on deck, and pea-coats and south-westers had been from the first the order of the day. We had as yet enjoyed breakfast only in expectancy, for cups and saucers were frail and unadvisable gear where heavy chairs were breaking their arms and legs below stairs. However, on nearing the north-eastern end of Barra, we at last sought a sheltering Sound between the small uninhabited Isles of Flodday,

Uidhay, and another without a name. As soon as we came to anchor, and cook and steward could attend their calling, coffee and mutton-chops were found very edifying, without prejudice to a more substantial fare in the course of the evening. "Never," says a certain journalist, in a fit of fine enthusiasm, "Never were hot and hot more speedily devoured." We had run about sixty miles 'twixt nine and three.

The islands around this Sound of Flodday were very rocky, and yet extremely verdant wherever pasture prevailed. There is a sunk rock between Uidhay and our anchorage, not marked on the charts. Our pilot once stuck upon it with a Revenue cruiser, which was obliged before getting off to cast her guns overboard, six out of eight being never recovered.

29*th July*.—The wind not merely stormy, but fierce as a tigress raging for her young. We could not stir an inch, and were scarcely able to stand on deck with our hats on. It was also so cold, that we were glad to keep the cabin all day. Saw around us for the first time during the present voyage, specimens of the Arctic Gull (*Lestris Richardsonii*), pursuing as is their wont, the

other kinds of gull,—forcing them to disgorge their food. Observed a feature of this manœuvre which we had never before noticed. When they descend upon what may be called the victim gull, either actually striking it on the back, or with an angry menace seeming so to do, they frequently tumble themselves head over heels beyond and beneath it, so as to hang as it were for a few seconds in the air back downwards, but with ready beak, intent to seize the savoury half-digested morsel, disgorged in terror by their timirous cousins.

30th July.—The storm was worse than ever. No trees, of course, to mark the sweeping of the angry element. Ruysdaël and G. Poussin must here have sought some other modes of communicating delight from dappled shades of "dingle and bushy dell," or terror from oak-rending and outrageous blasts. But we saw the vexed waves springing from many a hard unyielding crag, and then sending forth their lengthened horizontal streams in drenching showers along the briny shore. Observed seven seals, some of them very large, stretched on a rocky point a-head of us. They looked at first like enormous sheep lying

among the wet sea-weed. While gazing at them through the glass, we were surprised by their tumbling suddenly, splash after splash, into the sea. A moment afterwards a sail boat dashed through between the lee of their rock and the southern land, and made its way foamingly towards the Cutter. It carried Mr. MacMillan, the factor of Barra, who hearing we were storm-bound, had kindly ventured on board to offer his services, and remained with us till the close of day.

31*st July*.—Weather moderating. Having blown its best (or worst) for three successive days, the opinion of those on board, skilful in prognostics, is that Boreas is now about to shut his mouth. The pilot certainly said from the first that it would be "coorse" for that number of days, and then subside. We now require to be much more wary in our proceedings than when we had the magnificent embayments of the western coasts of the mainland to make for in an hour of need. Here harbours are few even on the eastern shores, and along vast ranges of the western coasts of these outer isles, there is nothing but open rock-obstructed bays, from which a vessel seldom gets out, as she is probably wrecked while going in. As it was our object to

go round the Butt of Lewis by these western shores, we were all the more anxious for moderate weather, while exposed to the unmitigated rolling of the broad Atlantic. Mr. MacMillan came to us again this morning, bringing with him two buckets full of the famous blue cockles of Barra, which are probably the finest, largest, and most abundant in the kingdom. According to the Secretary, they surpassed even the "yont side" shellfish of Morayshire, which are likewise noted in their way. "This ile," says Dean Monro, "is full of grate cokills, and alledgit by the ancient countrymen that the same cokills comes doun out of the foresaid hill through the said strype, in the first small forme that we have spoken of, and after ther coming down to the sandes growis grate cokills always. Ther is na fairer and more profitable sands for cokills in all the warld."* Except

* It is not easy to calculate the amount of such beds of shellfish, but we may mention that during a period of great distress which prevailed a good many years ago, all the families in the island (then about 200 in number) resorted for the sake of this food to the great sands at the northern end of Barra. It was computed that for a couple of summers, at the time alluded to, no less than from 100 to 200 horse-loads were taken at low

these shell-fish we met with nothing either pleasant, profitable, or picturesque in this immediate quarter, and regretted being longer detained than elsewhere by stress of weather, in a place where there was nothing to do, and little to look at. Neither angling, nor scenery, nor sea-fishery,—nothing of any kind but wind and water, and a few low bare craggy islands, which however afforded us a sufficing shelter from the western blasts. Had we been cooped up at Laxford, or Poolewe, or Castle-Tyrim, then the kill-salmon case would have assumed another aspect, and forced detention might have proved desired advantage. Many a time have we sacrificed our plans of pleasure or amusement, to that stern sense of duty to our country, by which we trust we shall ever be distinguished. Here we can do little else (though that indeed is much) than placidly exercise those Christian virtues,—patience and resignation.

However, as the wind was obviously decreasing, we weighed anchor in the course of the forenoon,

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water every day of the spring-tides during the months of May, June, July, and August. We were pleased to hear it observed that these shell-fish are always most abundant in years of carcity.

making for a well known shelter in the southern extremity of Barra called Kishmul or Castle Bay. This gave us an opportunity of seeing a large portion of the island. Barra is greatly superior in its pasture to any thing we have noticed elsewhere in the Long Island. Though pervaded by middle-sized mountains of a somewhat craggy character, its general herbage is extremely rich and sweet, and we saw none of those low undrained deserts of black and scowling moorland, so abundant in the Lewis. The eastern coast, in general, is rocky though not precipitous, along the shore, with an intermingling of moss and heathy pasture; the western side is defended by a barrier of precipitous cliffs, with exception of certain bays, of which the shores are low and sandy. By a survey of the parish made about twenty years ago, it was found to consist of above 22,000 acres, whereof

Arable, . . .	3,921
Machir, or sandy, .	1,540
Hill pasture, . .	16,139
Moss, or meadow, .	470
	22,070

It is equally devoid of trees with the other portions of the Long Island. The wind being fresh and in

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CASTLE KISHEMILL IN BARRA.

our favour, we speedily found ourselves in our desired haven within the roomy shelter of the Castle Bay, the opening to which is well protected by the island of Vatersay, which stretches across it to the south.

The most important and imposing feature of this spacious harbour-ground consists of the ruins of the insular Castle of Chisamil or Kishmul, the ancient stronghold of the M'Neills of Barra—chiefs of one division of the clan. Some of these gentlemen were more uproarious characters than many of the name with whom we have been acquainted in modern times, especially a certain *Ruary 'n' tartar*, or Rory the turbulent, who flourished in his own wild way in the days of James VI. Having committed piracy on an English vessel, a complaint was lodged against him by Queen Elizabeth before the Scottish court, and he was summoned to appear at Edinburgh, to answer for his conduct. Thinking that every man was most secure in his own castle, he refused to attend in the capital, on which several unsuccessful attempts were made to apprehend him, which only proved how hard it has always been to catch 'n' tartar. He was at last, however, captured

through stratagem by Mackenzie, tutor of Kintail, who under cover of a friendly visit to Kishmul Castle, invited him on board his vessel, and then carried him off under cloud of night after plying him with at least his due proportion of strong waters. Rory probably had his weak side, like many other great men, before and since. He was tried at Edinburgh for his life, and being interrogated during the course of procedure, as to his reason for having treated Queen Elizabeth's subjects with so much barbarity, he replied that he thought himself bound by his loyalty to retaliate the dreadful doom inflicted by the Queen of England on his own beloved sovereign, the mother of his majesty. This saved his life, though his estates were forfeited for a time. These were, however, eventually restored, on condition of being held of Mackenzie of Kintail as feudal superior. The superiority was soon after transferred to Sir James Macdonald of Sleat, on occasion of his marriage to a daughter of Kintail's, and has remained in that family (now Lords Macdonald) ever since.

The clan M'Neill, originally of Irish origin, is regarded by those conversant in Celtic history, as one of the most ancient and unmixed of all the

Highland septs. They are believed to have inhabited these islands at a period anterior to the Danish conquest, and in after times the alliance of their chieftains was much courted by the "Lords of the Isles," on account of the great skill and boldness as seamen of the people over whom they ruled. A charter still exists by Alexander, Lord of the Isles (and Earl of Ross), granting Gilleownan, grandson of Murdoch M'Neill, not only the lands of Barra, but those of Boisdale in South Uist, on condition of his assistance by sea and land, in peace or war, against all enemies whatsoever "men and women." It was dated at Finlagan in Islay, in 1427, and was confirmed by James the IV. in 1495, when the supreme power of the island lords was broken. It is related of the Lairds of Barra, that so soon as "the family" in ancient times had dined, it was customary for a herald to sound a horn from the battlements of the castle tower, proclaiming aloud in Gaelic, "Hear, Oh! ye people! and listen, Oh! ye nations! The great M'Neill of Barra, having finished his meal, the princes of the earth may dine!"

We had formerly occasion to mention that this clan consisted of two great stocks (said to have

descended from brothers),—the families of Barra and Gigha. Gilleownan, just alluded to, was killed in Coll by John Garve Maclean, with whom he disputed the possession of that island. Another of the same name, probably his grandson, was chief of the sept in 1493. Of the Gigha branch the first of whom we possess any authentic account is Hector MacTorquil MacNeill, who was keeper of Castle Sweyn in Knapdale, under the Lord of the Isles, in 1472. Malcolm, chief of this sept in 1493, was probably his son. It is worthy of notice that after the forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles, MacNeill of Barra followed the fortunes of Maclean of Duart, while he of Gigha adhered to those of Macdonald of Isla and Cantyre, so that when in the course of the sixteenth century the Macleans and Macdonalds stood opposed in bloody feud, the two septs of MacNeills turned their swords against each other.* This was wrong.

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* GREGORY, *Highlands and Islands*, p. 79. According to Mr. Skene the MacNeills first appear in the beginning of the 15th century as a powerful clan in Knapdale, in the mainland of Argyll. He seems to think that neither Barra nor Gigha was chief during the earlier period of our history. In 1472, Hector

We may here say a word or two upon the theoretical history of clans in general. The Athenians had their Philæ, the Romans their Gentes, and even the Israelites, a nation almost as old as

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MacTorquil MacNeill, keeper of Castle Sweyn, is witness to a charter of Celestine, Lord of Loch Alsh; and from his office of heritable keeper of Castle Sweyn it is presumed he must have been chief of the clan. Six years after this period the family of Geya appear in the person of Malcolm MacNeill of Gigha, who witnesses a charter granted by John, Lord of the Isles, in 1478. From this time the clan remained divided into the two families of Barra and Gigha, and it is difficult to say how one portion became so far detached from the other. Disputes, however, have arisen between these two branches as to the chieftainship,—"a circumstance," says Mr. Skene, "which can be easily accounted for, when we recollect that the remoteness of the two possessions must have superseded all dependence or connexion between their occupiers, and that a long period of independence would naturally lead each of them to claim the chiefship of the whole. As late as the middle of the 16th century, it is certain that neither of these families was in possession of the chiefship, for in the Register of the Privy Seal there appears in that year a letter "to Torkill MacNeill, chief and principal of the clan and surname of MacNelis;" and it is unquestionable that this Torkill was neither Gigha nor Barra, for at that date MacNeill of Gigha's name was Neill MacNele, and that of Barra Gilleownan NacNeill. As this Torkill is not designated by any property, it is probable that the chiefs of the MacNeills possessed the hereditary office of keeper of Castle Swen, in which capacity the

the Highlanders, are well known to have been divided into twelve great clans, although we know not that any member saving Joseph, ever wore tartan.* The conclusions to which Mr. Skene has arrived on the subject of clanship are the following. *First*, The Gaelic race at present occupying the Highlands have existed as a distinct and peculiar people, inhabiting the same districts which they now occupy, from the earliest period to which the records of history reach. *Secondly*, Previous to

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first chief of the clan appears. After this period we cannot trace any chief of the clan distinct from the families of Barra and Gigha, and it is probable that the family of the hereditary keepers of Castle Swen became extinct in the person of Torkill, and that his heiress carried his possessions to the MacMillans whom we find soon after in possession of Castle Swen, with a considerable tract of the surrounding country. Tradition unquestionably points to Barra as now chief of the clan, and in this family the right to the chiefship probably exists, although the extreme distance of his possessions, which he appears from the first charter of Barra to have obtained in consequence of a marriage with an heiress of the Macleans, from the rest, led many of them to follow the MacNeills of Gigha, and made the latter family almost independent."—*The Highlanders of Scotland*, vol. ii., p. 117.

* This point is not alluded to by John Sobieski Stuart in his recently published and very splendid work, entitled *Vestiarium Scoticum*, &c.

the thirteenth century that Gaelic nation was divided into a few great tribes, which exactly correspond with the ancient earldoms of that part of Scotland. The hereditary chiefs of these tribes were termed Maormors, a title which the influence of Saxon manners changed to that of Earl. *Thirdly*, From these few tribes all the Highlanders are descended, and to one or other of them each of the Highland clans can be traced. The following is Mr. Skene's TABULAR VIEW.

	Name of the Tribe according to Ptolemy.	Name of the Maormorship or Earldom.	Name of the Great Clans.	Name of the Small Clans.	Name of the Chief.
Dicaledones Cruthne or Northern Picts.	Kaledonioi.	The Gallgael.	Siol Cuinn.	Clan Rory.	Macrory.
				Clan Donald.	Macdonell.
				Clan Dugall.	Macdugald.
			Siol Gillevray.	Clan Neill.	Macneill.
				Clan Lachlan.	Maclachlan.
				Clan Ewen.	Macewen.
			Siol Eachern.	Clan Dugall, Craignish.	Campbell of Craignish.
				Clan Lamond.	Lamond.
			Clan Donnachie.	. . .	Robertson.
			Clan Pharlane.	. . .	Macfarlane.
	Kanteai.	Moray.	Clan Chattan.	. . .	Macpherson.
			Clan Cameron.	. . .	Cameron.
			Clan Nachtan.	. . .	Macnachtan.
			Clan Gilleon.	. . .	Maclean.
			Siol O'Cain.	Clan Roich.	Monro.
				Clan Gillemhaol.	Macmillan.
	Karnones.	Ross.	Clan Anrias.	. . .	Ross.
			Clan Kenneth.	. . .	Mackenzie.
			Clan Mathan.	. . .	Mathieson.
			Siol Alpine.	Clan Gregor.	Macgregor.
				Clan Grant.	Grant.
				Clan Fingon.	Mackinnon.
				Clan Anaba.	Macnab.
				Clan Duffie.	Macphie.
				Clan Quarrie.	Macquarrie.
				Clan Aulay.	Macaulay.
	Kreones.	Garmoran.	Clan Leod.	. . .	Macleod.
			Clan Campbell.	. . .	Campbell.
	Kournaovioi.	Caithness.	Clan Morgan.	. . .	Mackay.
	Kairinoi.	Ness.	Clan Nicol.	. . .	Macnicol.

We shall now return to the matter more immediately in hand. The Castle of Kishmul is of unknown antiquity. It is said to be named from the word *kish*, signifying tribute, and probably referring to the exactions formerly enforced by its people (still remarkable for their seamanship) on passing vessels.* We rowed to the rock on which it stands,

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* It is mentioned by Dean Monro, who travelled through the Isles in 1594, under the name of Kilclerin. "Within the south-west end of this ile (Barray) there enters a salt-water loche, verey narrow in the entrey, and round and braid within. Into the middis of this loche there is ane castle in ane ile, upon ane strengthey craige, callit Kilclerin, pertaining to Mr. Mackneil of Barray." Even in the more recent days of Martin, who wrote above a century later, the watchful jealousy of the natives prevented his examining this ancient stronghold. "The little island Kismul lies about a quarter of a mile from the south of this isle; it is the seat of Mackneil of Barra; there is a stone wall round it two stories high, reaching the sea; and within the wall there is an old tower and an hall, with other houses about it. There is a little magazine in the tower, to which no stranger has access. I saw the officer called the cockman, and an old cock he is; when I bid him ferry me over the water to the island, he told me he was but an inferior officer, his business being to attend in the tower; but if (says he) the constable, who then stood on the wall, will give you access, I'll ferry you over. I desired him to procure me the constable's permission, and I

and were speedily landed on that sea-surrounded and almost sea-covered site. Outside the entrance there still remains a very tolerable boat-harbour, constructed of large masses of stones, and at its mouth there is a sort of landing slip leading into what seems to have been an outer court of defence. A covered way probably gave access to the entrance of the castle itself, which is placed in the curtain near the base of the great square keep. The inner court is hexagonal, of considerable dimensions, and surrounded by the remains of low buildings, which probably constituted the domestic dwellings of the family. The higher walls have gangways inside for manning the loop-holes, and battlements. The principal tower in the north-eastern angle has no opening whatever from below, but must have been entered about one-third of its height upwards,

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would reward him; but having waited some hours for the constable's answer, and not receiving any, I was obliged to return without seeing this famous fort. Mackneill and his lady being absent was the cause of this difficulty, and my not seeing the place. I was told some weeks after that the constable was very apprehensive of some design I might have in viewing the fort, and thereby to expose it to the conquest of a foreign power; of which I supposed there was no great fear."—*Western Isles*.

through a now window-looking door inside, and by means of a stair, the projecting fragments of which are still visible, leading towards the ramparts, and probably connected with these by means of a wooden bridge or platform, removeable at pleasure from above. The walls inside the keep have various stairs leading up and down, but only the uppermost apartments had any windows giving light from without. Directly over the outer entrance, and at a considerable height above it, there is a perforated and projecting ledge of masonry, near which the watchman stood all night, ever and anon dropping through it a large stone over the front of the gateway, as a warning to nocturnal visitors not to come unasked. It must have been dangerous work in those days to "tirl at a pin." Even as a place to dine in, we would greatly on the whole, either with or without the after flourish of trumpets, prefer the dwelling of John the peaceful of Colonsay, to that of Rory the turbulent of Castle Kishmul. There is a dungeon in the north-west angle, and the centre of the inner court contains a well of fresh water. The belief of the people here (as at Castle-donan, in Kintail) is that this well was supplied with

water from the hills by means of pipes from the main-island, and a portion of built wall, running into the sea, is thought to strengthen the truth of the assertion. The well is now filled up with stones to prevent accidents.

We understand that this castle was inhabited as late as the beginning of last century, and a Mrs. Somebody was named to us as still residing in Barra, whose mother was born within its walls. The final cause of its having been left at last without any human inhabitants, was we presume some hydraulic derangement of the pipes before alluded to. At all events, during a long continuance of stormy weather, a sick child of the latest resident family is said to have died in consequence of the want or scarcity of water, and as the buildings were we doubt not by that time crumbling to decay, this and their private grief combined, induced them to move to the mainland of Barra.

There we also landed ere long, to make inquiries regarding the fisheries and other points. There are only a few poor huts along the inner circle of the bay, with a single slated house, of a more substantial kind, with two storeys. The under portion of the latter is occupied as a store, the upper

by some well-mannered middle-aged ladies of the name of M'Neill, relations to the recent laird,* who kindly asked us in, and gave us tumblers of milk (with a dash of dew) by which we felt sensibly refreshed. The cottages are singularly constructed here, as in other parts of the Long Island, of dry stone walls, five or six feet thick, filled with earth in the centre, the angles rounded, and the interior habitable portion covered over with turf or straw bound down by ropes of twisted heather. They are roofed from the inner edge so as to leave a broad flat ledge or parapet all round, generally covered with coarse herbage, and sometimes ornamented (or otherwise as the case may be) by a Highland maiden, there spinning busily with her distaff and spindle. All these huts have certainly doors, but we are by no means so sure about the windows. We saw two round holes in the gable end of the thatch of some of them, we presumed for light, and likewise a hole through the wall at each end, probably for ventilation in accordance with the direction of the wind. Some

* Barra, and its dependencies, have been lately purchased from the ancient family by Colonel Gordon of Cluny.

of them however had small glazed windows, but in all chimneys were wanting, the smoke as usual making its misty way through an opening in the roof. The inhabitants seem a stout and healthy race,—some of the women rather good-looking,—none of them at all tidy. They wore what seemed bright coloured Monteith handkerchiefs over their heads, which had rather a good effect in the distance, as we saw them winding down a craggy tortuous path towards the shore, with a long cortège of ponies, laden with peats from the moorland district. We afterwards saw a couple of them seated on a barn-floor grinding with the *quern* or ancient hand-mill of the country, not now in frequent use.

We ere long walked into the interior of the island by a road leading north-westward. We passed in the first place by the shore of a smaller bay of the sea, and then through a kraal of houses of the kind described above, clustered on both sides of the way, and forming a kind of rude irregular street. The inhabitants turned out to look at us with great curiosity, and probably thought us as odd-looking fellows as we did some of them. We hope they were satisfied with the exhibition,

as it cost them nothing. Several of these houses were composed of two apartments, each constructed like a separate building, but united together by a junction after the manner of the Siamese twins. As we walked onwards we observed that the patches of pasture were full of red clover of the perennial kind, which the cattle were eating greedily. It would be well worth while to collect the ripe seeds, to sow them in a piece of garden or other enclosed ground, and after a few repeated periods of successful and increased cultivation, to scatter them here and there over the general pasture.

As we approached towards the western shores of the island, we could see to the northward long sloping downs of the most beautiful smooth green pasture, and great sand hills of the purest and most finely comminuted shells. The latter are lashed up by the sea, and then drifted inlands by the continuous force of the prevailing winds, to the great enrichment of the general surface.

Observing a fresh water lake gleaming to the leftwards, we proceeded almost instinctively towards it; and, as our rods were with us at any rate, we tried an hour's angling. Knowing no-

thing by experience of the fresh-water fish of these Outer Hebrides, and believing that the lakes chiefly yielded the small dark-coloured moorland trout, what was our surprise and pleasure to find ourselves immediately dragging from their crystal depths most beautiful though reluctant fishes of the finest forms and fairest colours, all clear and stainless, and exactly resembling the famed variety of Loch Leven. They bore the same resemblance as these do to sea-trout, wanting equally the crimson portion of the macular markings, and agreeing in their uniformity (among themselves) of size and colour. Like the Loch-Levens, the largest scarcely exceeded a pound in weight, while few even of the smallest fell below three quarters. The Secretary and ourself killed in a short time thirteen of these fish, of singular beauty. This was an interesting discovery in the physical history of trouts in general, as exhibiting the relation which certain of their constitutional characters bear, either in the way of connection or dependance, to the external circumstances by which they are surrounded. This loch, called we believe Tangéstal, from the farm in which it is situate, has one side of its shores flat, shallow, and sandy,

while the other is, at least in parts, more stony and abrupt, with deeper and more suddenly descending water. Beds of weeds grow up from the shallower ground in various places, and afford provision and shelter to numerous small fresh-water shells, while beneath the stones, along the rougher shore, haunt myriads of those minute Entomostraca which form the favourite and most fattening food of fishes. Deep quiet central places of repose lead by gradation upwards to shallower sunny fields for sport and play, through which the shadows of fleeting clouds dapple for a moment the tranquil beauty of the golden sands. A stony isle, bearing time-honoured ruins of Danish Dun, or Celtic stronghold, uprises in the distance;—and now, what need we more than the memory of the fair though frail Queen Mary, or the presence of Commissioner Jardine of the Engineers, to change Tangéstal to Loch Leven? Nothing but corresponding trouts of outward pearly lustre, and flesh of roseate hue,—and there they were. We only wish a portion of our numerous readers had seen our dozen and one, as they lay in brotherly resemblance stretched for inspection on the verdant grass, and pressing beneath their gentle

T.D.L.

LOCH TANGESTAL IN BADNA WITH THE [illegible] SEAT OF THE Mc NEILLS

weight some brilliant balmy heads of full blown clover, half hidden by " silver sheen!"

> " And verily, the silent creatures made
> A splendid sight, together thus exposed :
> Dead—but not sullied or deform'd by Death,
> That seem'd to pity what he could not spare."

We hope that in the next edition of the valuable work to which we have had occasion to make such frequent reference, a portion of the following passage will be expunged. " There are only four fresh-water lakes in the island, none of which exceed half a mile or a mile in length, or deserve any further notice, than that they abound in *small black trout* and eels, and have each an old Dun built upon one of their small rocks or islands."* We observed also Stickle-backs in this loch.

Besides the buildings above alluded to, there are numerous remains in Barra of ancient watch-towers, usually regarded, in common with the Duns themselves, as of Scandinavian origin. In reference to the latter, however, the author of the old *Statistical Account* observes as follows:—

* *New Statistical Account*, No. xxxi., p. 202.

"While the Danes were in possession of these islands, they confined the natives to their own Duns, which are all built on fresh-water lochs, or small creeks formed by the sea; whereas those of the Danes are built upon eminences." * If this were so, the Celtic population must have led a tiresome life. The only inhabitants of the Dun of Tangéstal, in our time, were a large flock of snow-white geese, which had been located there to breed. It was probably only a place of occasional resort in times of danger. There seemed no entrance to it of any kind from below, and we presume it must have been mounted from above by means of a ladder. On the side nearest the land were two arrow-slit perforations, and a causeway is said to have once led to it from the shore. We certainly while angling came upon a range of large submerged stones, but we fancied they had been laid there by some ancient Scandinavian lover of the "Rod and the Gun," sedulous in his search for trout or wild duck,—the chief objection to at least a part of our theory being, that gun-

* Vol. xiii., p. 334.

powder was then unknown. The stony ground around it was covered by the large broad leaves of *Tussilago petasites.*

While returning towards Castle Bay, we met a troop of natives making their way homewards from the sea-fishing, and each bearing (probably only a portion of their actual capture) for family use, as much as he could carry of cod, rock-cod, dog-fish, plaice, and magnificent flounders. We were surprised to find that it was with great difficulty (overcome indeed at last only through the intervention of the factor) that we could prevail upon them to hand over for our behoof (and a proper remuneration) to two of the Cutter's crew who accompanied us, a small supply for the uses of the cabin. We at this time made a poor deaf and dumb boy extremely happy through the medium of a new and " splendid shilling," which he gazed at with as much delight and wonder as if he had just discovered the Georgium Sidus.

There are no hares in Barra, though rabbits are abundant. A few grouse occur, but no black game. Land-rails are frequent. Deer are now extinct, though their antlers are found in the mosses. The last which was observed in the parish

was an inhabitant of the neighbouring island of Muldonich. There are no vermin, such as polecats or weazels. The only butterfly we saw was *Hipparchia pamphilus*. Reptiles are unknown.

We were satisfied from what we saw and heard that by judicious aid and encouragement the sea fisheries might here be much improved. Although herrings are neither so regular nor so abundant as of old, we ascertained that they visit the coast at least twice a-year—in May and June, October and November. The natives believe these shoals to belong to two different species, but of this we found no satisfying proof. That they occur at other and intermediate periods we do not doubt, and a little more activity and enterprise might possibly lead to the discovery of more regular stations, as well as times. The winter ones are the best, but those of summer improve from the period of their first appearance. At all events, the finest fishing banks for cod and ling (the latter particularly excellent) extend from Loch Boisdale to Barra Head. We understand an east country crew made a capital job of it last year.

The late proprietor carried on, we believe unsuccessfully, an extensive soda manufactory. Kelp

is still made in considerable quantity, and a better price obtained (£3 at the shore) than when Colonel Gordon first made the purchase. About 1400 ton of *cut weed* kelp may be made on the estate. The *drift* ware is more precarious, depending so much on that fickle element the wind. We understand, however, it has been deemed more valuable by some, on account of its containing a greater proportion of iodine.*

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* A knowledge of the kelp manufacture was first introduced from Ireland into the Scottish Islands, above a century ago. Its alkali, though an opaque substance, combines with sand, likewise opaque, to produce transparent glass. It is also used in many other useful arts. A given quantity of kelp does not contain nearly so much pure alkali as the same quantity of barilla, but owing to the high duty on the latter, the former could be sold in larger quantities for smaller sums. As soon as it became an ingredient in two articles (not much used in the Highlands) soap and glass, its export and consumption became great, and the profits of the coast proprietors conformable. Small properties in Orkney, and elsewhere, worth not more than £40 per annum, rose to £300, and some of our great proprietors found themselves in the receipt of ten or twelve thousand a-year from tangled rocks from which they had never before received a single farthing. Truly we now know of something "alga projecta vilior," and Horace and Lord Macdonald by no means

A large proportion of the population of Barra belongs to the Roman Catholic persuasion, though this was not their continued form of belief as a Christian people, for the Protestant religion prevailed till after the Restoration. When Episcopacy was

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accord regarding the "*alga inutilis.*" But the removal in more recent times of the duty on barilla (an article of Spanish culture) though intended as a public benefit, produced severe and numerous local disadvantages. The manufacture of kelp is a rude enough process. Sea-weed, of various kinds, is collected into heaps, inducing a slight fermentation. These are afterwards spread out to dry, and then reduced to ashes by burning in pits or ovens lined with stones. Combustion is continued till the pits are filled, the alkali fuses, and forms on cooling into a solid mass, which is broken by means of iron bars into large pieces, and presented to the commercial public under the name of kelp. From day to day, during the periods above recorded, we saw the smoking heaps along those island shores, and could even smell them from afar.

Barilla, the Spanish article, is made much in the same manner, chiefly from a low growing annual plant called *Salsola satira*, and another of perennial growth named *Salsola soda*. These plants are raised by sowing the seeds very superficially over ground previously well prepared by ploughing and manure. An acre of land is supposed to yield about a ton of barilla. Although the article is most successfully cultivated near the sea shore, it is also produced in parts of Spain forty leagues inland.

established in Ireland, some priests fled or took banishment to the outer Hebrides. At this time Harris and Barra constituted a single parish, and the minister residing habitually in the former, the latter was necessarily neglected in such a way that the priests made inroads upon the people, and converted them to their own belief. We were sorry to be informed that they are much addicted both to spirits and tobacco. After procuring a couple of sheep, we returned on board the Cutter, where we enjoyed an immediate opportunity of testing the quality of the trouts whose outer aspect we have already lauded. The Secretary thought them the best he had ever tasted from fresh water, and the Naturalist was nearly of the same opinion.

We sailed from the Castle Bay with a fair wind, on the forenoon of the 1st of August, taking our course southward towards Barra Head. We passed portions of Vatersay, low and sandy, but with rich pasture, Muldonich, high and lumpy, Sanderay, Pabbay, Mingalay, and other islands of the Barra group, all having navigable sounds between them. The most southern of all is Ber-

nera, or Barra Head, the termination of the "Long Island." It rises upwards from the north in a steep though verdant slope, and then descends into the sea by a fine bold precipice, nearly 700 feet in perpendicular height,—the summit being distinguished by a light-house. A portion of the western coast of Mingalay is also extremely steep and lofty, and both these last-named isles are haunted during the breeding season by innumerable sea-fowl, the eggs, flesh, and feathers of which are collected by the natives. Melancholy accidents, involving loss of life, have occurred during their cliff-scaling excursions, even in recent years. Our farewell views of these precipitous isles were very fine, especially towards the close of day, when the slant sunbeams were reflected from their lofty fronts, and their dark unyielding bases contrasted well with the glittering surface of the swelling sea.

The weather throughout the day had been fine, and the wind moderate, but in consequence of the preceding storm from the west we found a considerable swell setting in as soon as we had rounded Barra Head. Our course now lay south-west-

wards, and as the evening closed around we lost all sight of land, and worked our darkling way towards the

> "Utmost Kilda's shore, whose lonely race
> Resign the setting sun to Indian worlds."

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

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